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DIVISION OF OVERSEAS MINISTRIES GLOBAL MINISTRIES

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“That all of God’s people and creation share in God’s Abundant Life”

Global Ministries’ Vision Statement

To receive and share the good news of Jesus Christ by joining with global and local partners to work for justice peace and reconciliation”

Global Ministries’ Mission Statement

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The Division of Overseas Ministries (DOM) and Wider Church Ministries celebrates twenty-five years of a common witness in mission through Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ. This ministry was founded after decades of joint work between DOM and the United Church Board for World Ministries (the predecessor organization to Wider Church Ministries). It began with shared area executives and the joint appointment of mission co-workers. Today, the homebased staff and mission co-workers are under the auspices of Global Ministries and there is a common budget to fund the work.

Global Ministries continues to be engaged with 291 partners, located in 90 countries around the world. These partners are affected by the major challenges facing God’s creation, including food security, peaceful resolution to conflict, human rights, climate change, natural disasters, migration and epidemics/pandemics. In addition to these challenges, the church continues to experience growth in Africa, Latin America and

some Asian countries. Overseas church partners continue to request the presence of mission co-workers. A total of 93 mission co-workers served in 42 countries in 2020.

Mission during the COVID-19 Pandemic

One of the major challenges in 2020 was the onslaught of COVID-19, which changed the landscape of mission. The Center for Disease Control defines COVID-19 as a highly contagious respiratory disease caused by SARS-CoV-2 spread from person to person through droplets released when the infected person coughs, sneezes, or speaks. The Johns Hopkins Center for Science and Engineering reports that as of January 12, 2021, there were 1,947,758 deaths globally attributed to COVID-19 and at least 50,400,048 recovered. As a result of this pandemic, Global Ministries initiated travel bans related to both domestic and international travel. Countries' borders were closed and physical distancing was initiated globally. In addition, domestic staff, as of the writing of this report are working remotely from their homes. The majority of the global mission interns had to be evacuated from their places of assignment; however, the majority of the fully supported mission co-workers remained in their countries of assignment. (Specific information related to mission personnel may be found in the Mission Personnel section of this report.) This pandemic resulted in the creation of new ways to be present with partners around the world through technology, including Zoom meetings and other platforms. This technology has resulted in more communication with partners. Global Ministries' area executives organized conferences, meetings, evaluations and even celebrations utilizing this technology. In addition, area executives have been able to meet with mission co-workers on a regular basis. In late December 2020, vaccines were authorized and recommended to prevent COVID-19 and are now in process of being administered albeit unequally. It is too early to determine their impact on the spread of the virus. It must be noted that some of Global Ministries partners responding to the most vulnerable are closing their doors because of lack of funds due to the pandemic.

Area Initiative

The Area Initiative Program is designed to engage members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ with one specific region of the world for an eighteen-month period. This allows for a more in-depth look into the life and witness of specific partners within a region. There have been initiatives related to the Congo, Middle East, and the Caribbean. The current regional initiative is related to Southern Asia. The theme of this initiative is "Together in Hope". It focuses on the following countries: Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, East Timor, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. Bible studies, worship material, videos, and educational resources are available to congregations. Due to COVID-19, the current Southern Asia Initiative has been extended for an additional six months.

Collaborative Work with other Disciples Ministries

The Division of Overseas Ministries/Global Ministries continues to collaborate with the Disciples Women in the organization and facilitation of the Woman-to-Woman Worldwide pilgrimages. The pilgrimage to Indonesia and Thailand was canceled because of the COVID-19 pandemic. There is collaborative work with the National Office of the Hispanic Ministries in the organization of pilgrimages to Latin America.

These pilgrimages are designed to assist Hispanic pastors in understanding the reasons people are risking their lives to cross the border to enter the United States. In addition, Global Ministries is working with HELM in organizing a pilgrimage for chaplains serving in colleges and universities. The Vice President of Overseas Ministries serves on the Disciples Home Missions' Leadership team and the Advocacy Associate serves on the Board of the Disciples Peace Fellowship and the Disciples Center for Public Witness.

Collaborative work with the United Church of Canada

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) entered into full communion with the United Church of Canada following the 2019 General Assembly. This new relationship has resulted in more collaboration between the United Church of Canada and Global Ministries. Currently, there are three jointly appointed mission co-workers. In 2020, three joint conferences were held related to Angola, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In addition, in February 2020 the leadership of the three denominations led a joint delegation to visit partners in Bangladesh, India, and Sri Lanka as a part of the Southern Asia Initiative.

Staff Update

Jane Sullivan-Davis retired after 38 years of faithful service in God's mission. Jane served as a mission co-worker for the Division of Overseas Ministries and later a Global Ministries mission co-worker in Argentina, Mexico, Peru, Chile, and New York for a total of 18 years. Since 2000, she has served as Executive for Resource Development for Global Ministries, working with individuals and congregations who wish to explore special giving opportunities to support the work of Global Ministries.

Krista Johnson Weicksel began full time service as the Global Advocacy and Education Associate. She served as a global mission intern in Jerusalem from 2006-2008. She spent eight years working in as a Peacebuilding Coordinator for the Mennonite Central Committee's International Program. In addition, she is certified as a Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience (STAR) trainer.

Deaths

Rev. Bob Bates, former mission co-worker and area executive, passed away on December 8, 2020. From 1957 until 1960, Bob and his wife, 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. In 1978, Bob began as the Executive for the Department of Interpretation and Personnel of the Division of Overseas Ministries until 1983 when he became the Area Executive of East Asia and the Pacific of the Division of Overseas Ministries, retiring in 1993.

FINANCE

Lonna Owens, Executive

The Division of Overseas Ministries (DOM) revenue for 2020 is estimated to be nearly \$6.6 million. This is due to an increase in charitable gifts from wills and estates. In 2020, DOM will receive a little over \$1,000,000 compared to \$52,000 in 2019. It is too early to know the actual revenue for the year.

Of the total revenue, some is designated giving for special programs, projects, endowment contributions, capital, and new church funding. Approximately 25% is from Wider Church Ministries of the United Church of Christ as part of the funding of joint work together as Global Ministries. The balance of the revenue comes from Disciples Mission Fund (DMF), investments of DOM, United Christian Missionary Society (UCMS) endowment distributions, Christian Church Foundation (CCF) permanent fund distributions, operating fund gifts and miscellaneous income.

The DOM Endowment assets are invested with the CCF in the Beasley Growth Fund and the Campbell Multi-Strategy Fund. Annually DOM takes a draw, which is 4.50% of the average prior 20-quarter rolling market value of the total investment. This draw is used to support operations and designated spending based on the restrictions of the endowment. In 2020, this draw was \$687,340 (*as compared to \$670,158 in 2019*).

An independent audit is performed annually of the financial records and accounting systems of DOM. A complete audit will be provided for the Yearbook upon completion of the audit and report made to the audit committee of the board. The audit committee will address any material internal control weaknesses found during the audit and suggested improvements to internal controls in the management letter to the board.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Jane Sullivan-Davis, Executive

In 2020, the Global Ministries Resource Development Office continues to engage members, all expressions of the United Church of Christ and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and other individuals and entities with like-minded values and commitments to God's global mission, to provide direct and planned gifts for the work of Global Ministries. Gifts raised by Resource Development do not include revenue from denominational and special-day offerings, and do not include fund distributions or distributable income from permanent/endowment funds of Wider Church Ministries (WCM) and the Division of Overseas Ministries (DOM). The priorities for all types of special gifts are the following:

1st Priority: Unrestricted Gifts, used where needed most in the work of Global Ministries

2nd Priority: Gifts for Mission Co-Worker Support, including the current experiences in personalized fundraising for mission personnel support

3rd Priority: Restricted Gifts for donor-specified Global Ministries partner churches/programs or theme-based designations

During 2020, the Global Ministries Spring Appeal letter was signed by the two Co-Executives and mailed on April 21, 2020 to approximately 27,600 households with a connection to Global Ministries in the U.S. and Canada. The 2020 Indianapolis Year-End Appeal, signed by the Disciple Co-Executive, was mailed on October 16, 2020 to about 12,000 households of Disciple constituents, constituents from denominations or faith communities other than UCC, and constituents for whom no denominational affiliation is known in the U.S. and Canada.

The Global Ministries staff team worked in 2020 on two personalized fundraising campaigns for mission co-workers. One of those cases concluded, that of Tom and Monica Liddle, whose mission appointment with the Protestant Churches in East Timor and subsequent home assignment, concluded on October 31, 2020. One remaining campaign continued during 2020, Larry and Debbie Colvin, serving with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana. This campaign is on track to meet its goal before the end of the appointment and home assignment period.

Special Giving promotion continued in 2020 for the Global Ministries Southern Asia Initiative "Together in Hope" including special gifts for ministries of Global Ministries partners in Southern Asia, with an emphasis on the three themes of the Initiative: Affirming Human Dignity; Urging Churches to be Open, Just, and Inclusive Communities; and Caring for Creation. The 2020 Global Ministries Alternative Christmas campaign included a promotion on giving for the COVID-19 response of the Centre for Social Equity and Inclusion (CSEI) in India.

During 2020, Global Ministries Resource Development updated the online Alternative Gift Catalog: Life-Changing Gifts. The updated resource includes the promotion of the eight giving themes: greatest need, mission co-worker appointments, peace with justice, addressing climate change, improving health, women's empowerment, education, and supporting vibrant churches.

AFRICA

Marco Cable, Executive

During the COVID-19 global pandemic, partners in Africa continued their transforming ministries providing services to their communities and sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. According to the Africa Centre for Disease Control, in 2020, Africa reported 2.7 million COVID-19 infections and over 65,000 deaths. When it was clear that the coronavirus was going to have a global impact, it was predicted by medical experts that the virus could have a devastating effect on Africa. Many forecasts likened the impact of COVID-19 to that of the 1980s and 90s AIDS crisis. It was estimated that the continent would experience deaths of up to 3.3 million and 1.2 billion infections. It was also predicted, "in Africa, deaths from COVID-19 might far exceed what the world is seeing." Yet from a global perspective, during the calendar year 2020, Africa trailed the world in COVID-19 cases and deaths.

The greatest pandemic challenge to partners in Africa was not medical but rather social and economic. Many of the broader repercussions affected women more severely than men. Women who earn a daily wage by selling produce, meals, or crafts were experiencing the highest rates of job loss. Much of this income has been lost due to "shelter-in-place" orders, and decreased tourism, which accounts for significant revenue loss. Like much of the world, Africa experienced increased gender-based violence that has resulted in growing domestic partner deaths. In response, many partners organized domestic violence awareness campaigns, empowered mothers' unions to organize shelters for women and girls and worked with law enforcement to sensitize communities to signs of domestic violence.

Partners experienced financial challenges during the pandemic. They laid off staff due to the tremendous reduction of funds because churches were not gathering in person, and unemployment increased. Educational institutions in Africa suffered because they could not have in-person classes, which impacted the income they received from school fees. Most institutions, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) relate to through Global Ministries did not have the infrastructure to support virtual learning. Some partners concluded their ministries in 2020 because of lost revenue from church offerings and government contracts.

Global Ministries supported partners with a COVID-19 awareness campaign and assisted with protective equipment: masks, handwashing stations, and hand sanitizer. In addition, support was given to women groups who made masks and other protective equipment for their communities.

In addition to COVID-19 support, the Africa Office continued to accompany partners in their sustainable development work, ministries addressing climate change, immigration/migration, inter-faith relationships, and human trafficking. Ministry in Africa continues alongside the global pandemic.

South Africa

At the beginning of the pandemic, the South Africa Synod of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa started hosting weekly “Thursdays in Black” zoom meetings. The “Thursdays in Black” campaign was initiated by the World Council of Churches to bring awareness to gender-based violence and advocate for a world free from rape and violence. South Africa experienced a substantial increase in documented violence cases against women and children during the strict COVID-19 lockdown.

The United Congregational Church of Southern Africa (UCCSA) Executive Committee voted in their September 2020 meeting to endorse the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement as a denomination and encouraged their congregations to join local BLM advocacy efforts. The Black Lives Matter movement is growing in South Africa, and the UCCSA is committed to joining global social justice movements created to advocate for marginalized communities.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo

On June 1, the Ebola virus was reported in Mbandaka, where the Community of Disciples of Christ in Congo (CDCC) Secretariat is located. In 2020, the Democratic Republic of Congo experienced eleven Ebola outbreaks. In response, the CDCC organized awareness campaigns on the dangers of the Ebola, provided sanitation equipment to churches and pastors, and set-up quarantine stations in most affected areas. They also mobilized resources to ensure that church hospitals were fully stocked to care for Ebola patients. The first Ebola case appeared in the equator region in 1976. At the end of 2020, the Equator Province, where the CDCC Secretariat is based, had 48 confirmed COVID-19 cases.

Mozambique and Zimbabwe

On December 30, Cyclone Chalene made a landfall in Madagascar, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe. The tropical storm affected partners in Zimbabwe and Mozambique and

moved through the same communities devastated by Cyclone Idai in March 2019. Beira, the port city in Mozambique and home of the United Church of Christ in Mozambique's head office, was hit the hardest, and communities in the path of the storm in Mozambique and eastern Zimbabwe had to be evacuated. In Mozambique, the United Church of Christ, the Christian Council of Mozambique, the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe, and the Zimbabwe Council of Churches coordinated emergency relief efforts.

Partners in Africa in 2020 have shown their resilience, creativity, and adaptability. They have provided a powerful witness to what is possible when nurtured in faith, prayer, and love.

Mission Co-workers

The following mission co-workers were evacuated to the United States in response to COVID-19:

Kahala Cannon, serving in Eswatini with the Council of Swaziland Churches in the Program and Justice Departments; and Danielle Murry-Knowles and Mark Knowles serving as Program Officers with the Lesotho Evangelical Church in Southern Africa.

Deaths

Reverend Jeanette Salley, a beloved member of the Global Ministries family and mission co-worker to the Theological Education by Extension (Zambia), died January 18, 2020, in Jackson, Mississippi, surrounded by family. Before being appointed to Zambia, Rev. Salley served in Haiti and Nicaragua. She is survived by her son Christopher M. Browder (Samantha), her grandchildren Jordan, Jasmine, Jayda, and Jayna Browder, a great-grandchild, and siblings Charles and Elizabeth Salley.

Reverend Peter Kaniyah Kariuki, General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (Kenya), died July 20, 2020, after suffering COVID-19 complications. He is survived by his wife, Nelius; three children Lydia Njeri, Kenneth Kariuki, and Joel Gikaria; and a granddaughter Niam Maryanne.

Bishop John K. Yambasu, the Resident Bishop of the Sierra Leone Area of The United Methodist Church, died in a road accident on August 16, 2020, just outside Freetown in Sierra Leone. At the time of his death, Bishop Yambasu served as the President of the Christian Council of Sierra Leone. Bishop Yambasu is survived by his wife, Millicent, and their five children — Rebecca, Adima, John, Emmanuel, and Elizabeth.

Reverend Allen Myrick died on December 20, 2020, at the age of 90. In 1957, Rev. Myrick and his wife, Judith, were appointed to serve as mission co-workers in South Africa under the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, where Allen taught in theological schools in Modderpoort. In 1968 the Myricks returned to the US, where he served as minister of the Whitneyville Congregational Church, Hamden, CT and the United Church of Christ of Kent, OH. In 1984, the Myricks were appointed as mission co-workers to Zimbabwe, where Allen did lay training work and local parish ministry from 1984 to 1994. Allen is survived by his loving wife of 66 years, Judith Myrick, and his three children, Becky Myrick, Helen Davis and her husband Dale, and

Philip Myrick and his wife Thea, as well as six grandchildren, Jessie Myrick, Krista Maruca, Hannah Davis, Cameron Davis, Alyona Myrick & Denis Myrick.

EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC

Derek Duncan, Executive

The ability to engage in partnership in familiar ways has been tested by the COVID-19 outbreak. Since travel was prohibited, most partner gatherings were cancelled or postponed in 2020. Partnership continued, however, through the presence of mission personnel and through support of development and assistance for needs caused by COVID-19 and natural disasters.

Virtual visits increased in lieu of travel. Global Ministries provided video greetings to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan in April and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea in September. Postponed travel included to the biannual Assembly of the Micronesian Council of the UCC (MCUCC) in July, an extended visit to the Amity Foundation, China Christian Council, and other partners in China in May, accompanied by long-term volunteer Guangyu Lou, and an August trip to the Philippines for the annual Church Workers Convocation at Silliman University Divinity School, which began its Centennial Anniversary in 2020.

Frequent video conferences were used to support EAP mission personnel and to collaborate with ecumenical working groups such as the Asia Pacific Forum (APF), an ecumenical table that gathers North American denominations and agencies with partners in the region, which the Area Executive co-chairs.

This year also saw an increasing awareness and growing manifestation of human rights abuses both in the US and around the world. Encroaching militarism, attacks by police and other government agents, racism and social discord are becoming as familiar in the US as other countries, highlighting the need for our continued collective global witness and advocacy.

China

The outbreak of COVID-19 began in January in mainland China and was addressed by partners there before spreading globally. Global Ministries joined in providing much-needed medical supplies to our partner, the Amity Foundation. Amity distributed protective equipment to several hospitals, including the Gulou Hospital in Nanjing, also known as Drum Tower Hospital, which was founded in 1892 by Disciples missionary Dr. William Edward Macklin. She Hongyu, Associate General Secretary of Amity wrote, "We are very thankful for the support of friends... in helping greatly with the purchase and shipment of much needed medical supplies. Your support is greatly valued."

Hong Kong

Mission co-worker Judy Chan retired in December after 26 years with Hong Kong Christian Council. Elder Dr. Wong Fook-ye, Acting General Secretary of the Hong Kong Christian Council, wrote Global Ministries upon the retirement of Judy Chan after 26 years of service. He wrote: "She is kind, humble and patient, fully respected by her

colleagues and those who work with her... Judy is a faithful servant of the Lord and we are grateful to have her working in the HKCC over the past 26 years.” Judy’s presence and insight was never more valuable than during the political turmoil that surrounded the implementation in June of a new National Security Law by mainland China authorities over the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. She explained the situation was “complicated”; while the churches generally have supported democracy and the rights of protesters, they also opposed violence and recognize the legal status of Hong Kong under Chinese sovereignty.

Japan

A major initiative in Japan slowed by the pandemic has been the transfer of the last property owned by Global Ministries, the Clapboard Inn in Kyoto, to the Kyoto Kyoku (“district”) of the United Church of Christ in Japan. Plans with the Kyoto Kyoku center around maintaining operations in the building of the Bazaar Café, which is a coffee shop ministry with outreach to migrants, HIV infected, LGBTQ and other persons on the margins of Japanese society. Global Ministries was able to provide grants to help sustain the important ministry of the Bazaar Café through coronavirus restrictions. Another program that received increased support this year is the Asia Rural Institute (ARI) in northern Japan, which is an agricultural and leadership development training center for young community leaders from all over the world and where Global Mission Intern Abigail Hernandez began serving in March.

Oceania/Pacific

The year began with extensive bushfires in Australia. With Week of Compassion, Global Ministries contributed to the Uniting Church of Australia and Churches of Christ in Australia to help churches meet the needs of those impacted by the fires.

One of the only partner visits made in 2020 was to the Pacific in March. In Fiji, the Area Executive visited Pacific Theological College and the Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC), where Global Mission Intern RJ Howard supports the ecumenical organization’s climate change work. The Area Executive then traveled to Apia, Samoa to attend a meeting with the Elders Committee of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa to renew partner relations and to discuss shared interests.

Once the pandemic spread, Global Ministries supported a variety of pandemic-related projects, such as the PCC Food and Seed Bank Project, which grows and distributes indigenous seeds to member churches on islands that have been cut off from essential supplies and healthcare due to the COVID-19 lockdown. This addresses the growing need of hunger in the islands, gives a greater role for the churches in addressing community needs, provides greater resiliency to typhoons and other effects of climate change, and reflects an emphasis on renewing local and indigenous knowledge and practices in Pacific churches as a response to climate change, disease, and other challenges that have resulted from colonial legacies.

Philippines

Global Ministries responded to partner needs in the Philippines after the Taal Volcano erupted in January south of Manila. In March 2020, the Area Executive traveled to observe volcano damage and relief efforts provided by the United Church of Christ in

the Philippines. He was accompanied by mission co-worker Andrew Larsen who began working in March with the Western Visayas Jurisdiction on its just peace programs. One of the bases for relief distribution for those displaced by the volcano was Union Theological Seminary in Cavite, where long-term volunteer Eleazar Fernandez serves as President.

The Area Executive also visited Dansalan College in Mindanao to assess the school's construction of new buildings on its Iligan City campus, which has been supported by Global Ministries. Dansalan College is one of the many UCCP-related schools that have been greatly impacted by the pandemic in the Philippines. Unfortunately, while COVID-19 has spread, the human rights situation in the country has also worsened. In July, the Philippines government enacted the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020, which legitimizes unlawful arrests and detention. In September, the National Council of Churches in the Philippines led international partners in invoking a Unity Statement for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in the Philippines. Continued advocacy for human rights in the Philippines remains a priority for our collaboration with partners and with the International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines.

South Korea

While 2020 was the 70th anniversary of the Korea War, commemorative events had to be adjusted due to the pandemic. Meetings of the Ecumenical Forum for Peace, Reunification and Development Cooperation on the Korean Peninsula were suspended, along with plans to hold, with the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCCK), a peace conference in Washington DC to remember the Nogunri Massacre in June. Global Ministries participated in virtual events, including the WCC/NCCCK "Light of Peace" prayer campaign from March to August and the NCCCK International Convocation to Declare a People's Korea Peace Agreement on July 23, during which Korean partners called for international support to finally sign a peace treaty.

Deaths

Rev. Lloyd G. Van Vactor was a retired mission co-worker and former President of Dansalan College in the Philippines. Reverend Lloyd Van Vactor and his wife, Maisie, served as missionaries of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines 1954 – 1981 in Mindanao during a time of violence between Christians and Muslims there. He led Dansalan College for a dozen years in the predominantly Muslim city of Marawi during a tense military occupation prompted by a Muslim secessionist movement. Through a combination of abiding faith, skilled leadership and physical courage, he expanded the high school and junior college to include an elementary school. He introduced programs for literacy, community organizing and agricultural training; a medical clinic; and a center for sociological and historical research. He passed away on December 25, 2020.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Angel L. Rivera-Agosto, Executive

Latin America and the Caribbean have been impacted by several crises. Hurricanes, migration, and COVID-19 shaped the way churches and ecumenical organizations have responded to God's mission through their ministries and programs. As of December 31,

2020, the Latin American and Caribbean Region reported almost 16 million infections, 18.75% of the global infections, and some 510,000 deaths, 28% of the total deaths related to the corona virus. In addition to this loss, earthquakes and hurricanes have affected Central America and the Caribbean. The U.S. Administration continued to impose economic sanctions on Cuba and Venezuela, disregarding the United Nations' request to terminate sanction policies. Migration policies, including reinforced border mechanisms to curb unwanted migratory flows, have increased mortality. That combined with the pandemic, created vulnerability and insecurity for forcibly displaced people. At the same time, xenophobia has intensified in host societies.

Puerto Rico

The island has passed through three different crises during this year. First, it was the ongoing reconstruction as a consequence of Hurricane María's passing in 2017. In January 2020, the island entered into an era of earthquakes that affected the island throughout 2020. Then, COVID-19 put Puerto Rico as the second most affected island in the Caribbean. Global Ministries' Partner organizations, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Puerto Rico, the United Evangelical Church of Puerto Rico, and the Puerto Rico Council of Churches worked together with their members accompanying the families affected by these three events. They have offered churches as shelters, worked on reconstruction, provided food, medicine, blankets, tents, and spiritual accompaniment amid these crises.

Paraguay

An official delegation led by DOM's President, Julia Brown Karimu and the Area Executive, visited the Global Ministries partner church, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Paraguay (CCDCPY), on the 100th Anniversary of its presence and ministry in Paraguay, from February 29 to March 9, 2020. The delegation celebrated the church of the CCDCPY and the International School as beacons of Disciples witness in the country. They also heard about political, economic, and social challenges in the country, especially the indigenous communities and peasants' claims. They visited local congregations throughout the country and engaged in dialogue with different social ministries including the First Paraguayan School for the Deaf and Friendship Mission. They perceived a vibrant Church, responding to the country's needs and being faithful in a country that continues to live under the legacy of Dictator Stroessner.

Nicaragua and Honduras

Hurricanes Eta (October 31, 2020) and Iota (November 13, 2020) struck Central America with less than a month between. The hurricanes passed through Central America with sustained winds between 75 to 155 mph, storming through Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast, entering the Honduran capital of Tegucigalpa, moving westward with an overwhelming amount of rain that produced mudslides. At least 30 persons died in Nicaragua and Honduras and more than 50,000 people were evacuated. Most of the infrastructure in cities like Puerto Cabezas in Nicaragua and San Pedro Sula in Honduras was heavily damaged. The Moravian Church of Nicaragua, Christian Mission Church, the Evangelical and Reformed Church in Honduras, and the Christian Commission for Development are still assessing the damage. They also shared food, medicine, seeds, and first aid equipment with communities in both countries.

Chile

The Shalom Center of the Pentecostal Church collaborated with Elena Huegel, from the Institute for Intercultural Research and Study (INESIN), in Mexico, to design and execute online support groups for partners in the region and mission personnel. The groups fostered relationships as the basis of a healthy community and as a critical part of a response to disruption. The first workshops took place in April and May 2020. The second set started in September 2020 and concluded in January 2021. At least 50 representatives from Global Ministries' partners participated as well as mission co-workers.

U.S.-Mexico Border

Thousands of migrants live in "tent cities" across the Mexican side of the border, waiting for their asylum petitions to be adjudicated in the U.S. The Daniel F. Romero Center for Border Ministries and Strategies, better known as Centro Romero, continued its work of solidarity and accompaniment in the San Diego-Tijuana border. Since March 2020, Centro Romero worked with a coalition of grassroots organizations providing housing, medical services, and appeals regarding migratory status for 65 families at the border. This included proper housing, seasonal flu and other vaccinations, economic sustainability, and support for their migratory status.

Cuba

On October 15, 2020, an ecumenical webinar was held on the impact of the President Trump's Administration on the churches with leaders from Cuban churches and ecumenical organizations. Cubans shared updates on current issues, including the difficulties of everyday life in terms of food and necessities, the impact of the blockade, the role of Cuban medical personnel around the world, and the need for solidarity between churches in Cuba and the United States. Congressman James Patrick McGovern participated in the meeting, along with the National Council of Churches (NCC) and the Cuban Council of Churches (CIC). There was a sense of how little we in the U.S. have accomplished to end the blockade against Cuba and normalize relations. However, Reverend Joel Ortega Dopico, CIC's Executive Secretary, said: "our best accomplishment is that we are together on this, regardless of how successful we have been in our campaign. We know that you pray for us as we pray for you and we feel accompanied by you."

Venezuela

Global Ministries continued its accompaniment to its partner, the Evangelical Pentecostal Union of Venezuela (UEPV), and this country's people. The National Council of Churches called for a cessation of any military intervention by the U.S. or third countries, eliminating economic sanctions and for the respect for the people of Venezuela's self-determination and this statement was signed onto by both denominations. On December 6, 2020, seven representatives from the U.S., Canada, Latin America, and the Caribbean accompanied the Evangelical Pentecostal Union of (UEPV) and the Venezuelan Human Rights Organization, SURES, in a Virtual Observation of Legislative Elections in Venezuela.

Colombia

The LAC Office and People-to-People Pilgrimage Program held a Virtual Pilgrimage to Colombia. The purpose of the "travel" was to affirm our presence and solidarity with the Mennonite Association for Justice, Peace, and Nonviolent Action (Justapaz) and the Peace and Justice Commission of the Evangelical Council of Colombia (CEDECOL). The pilgrimage was held from September 21-26, 2020. Participants from churches in the U.S. virtually "traveled" through afro-descendant Indigenous communities in the San Juan River, Chocó, to witness new developments related to the armed conflict and social effects of COVID-19 pandemic. They also reflected on advocacy-based biblical reflections, and proposals to make visible the armed conflict situations affecting the local communities.

Deaths

Justino Perez-Ojeda, 69, was an ordained minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Puerto Rico. He served with his wife Zaida Rivera as Mission Co-worker in Mexico from January 2001 until January 2010. They first served as Executive Coordinators of the Alberto Rembao Ecumenical Center of the Congregational Churches in Mexico. Between 2005 and 2009, they served as Consultants for the Mission Development Program in Mexico, a combined effort of Disciples and Congregational Churches. He passed away on December 10, 2020.

Extodolia Sosa, 74, was one of the founding leaders of the Evangelical Pentecostal Union of Venezuela (UEPV). She was president of the UEPV's Women Ministry for many years. "Sister Tola," as she was called, served on several congregations in Barquisimeto, Lara State, first as a layperson and then as a pastor. Her energy and passionate preaching inspired generations of Pentecostals in her beloved UEPV. She passed away on December 29, 2020.

MIDDLE EAST AND EUROPE

Peter Makari, Executive

2020 was an especially challenging year for work that involves nurturing community and cultivating relationships, due to the severe global pandemic of COVID-19 and its associated restrictions on work and travel. Ministry has been affected, including in the Middle East and Europe; yet Global Ministries and our Disciples partners in the region persevere in inspiring and hopeful ways.

With the beginning of the pandemic in March, and as its impact was immediately becoming clear, Global Ministries' area executives co-authored a report entitled, "Indiscriminate Disease, Unequal Vulnerability, and Inspiration for Human Resilience." The report asserted that "this virus does not discriminate: every race, gender, faith, ethnicity, and nation has experienced illness and death as a result. It is a demonstration, one might suggest, of our common humanity, of our sameness. No one is immune. Yet even as we witness the seemingly undifferentiated contagion of COVID-19, we cannot help but recognize that some are more vulnerable than others. This unequal vulnerability is in direct relation to wealth and privilege, which translate into access to testing, healthcare, and even acknowledgment of the presence of the

disease.” In the Middle East and Europe, where millions of people are displaced and refugees, the impact of such a complicating factor has been immense. Partners such as Mediterranean Hope in Italy, Perichoresis in Greece, and the Reformed Church in Hungary, have continued to offer appropriate and critical assistance to refugees who are in even greater distress.

Egypt

In the final in-person direct encounter with a regional partner before the pandemic forced changes in patterns of ministry, a delegation from Egypt visited the US from March 1-6, 2020 as part of a Egyptian-US Dialogue Initiative that has been ongoing since October 2014 and is designed to promote “Track II” diplomacy to increase understanding and engagement between the two countries. The Initiative is an effort led by the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS), our partner in Egypt, and specifically it’s Forum for Intercultural Dialogue. Meetings included encounters with US church leaders; Religions for Peace; United Nations officials; US government elected representatives in Congress and staff at the State Department; and others.

Syria

Despite the war in Syria being virtually absent in US media coverage, the violent conflict continues to affect life in the country, now compounded by COVID-19. In nearly a decade since the war began, it is estimated that nearly 600,000 people have been killed and more than half of the population remain forcibly displaced from their homes, either internally or as refugees in neighboring countries and beyond. In this recent term, Global Ministries and Week of Compassion have continued to support responses by partners in Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan, including the Middle East Council of Churches, the Fellowship of the Middle East Evangelical Churches (FMEEC), the Forum for Development, Culture, and Dialogue (FDCD), and the Orthodox Initiative. The appeals for humanitarian and COVID relief provided critically needed thermal blankets and electric heaters, cash subsidies for food and heating fuel, children’s winter clothing and shoes, and more. In addition, the Disciples (and UCC) were active in raising concerns with Congressional offices about the newly implemented Caesar Act, passed by Congress and which imposed new and additional strict sanctions on Syria.

Lebanon

In August, Lebanon experienced a major crisis with a devastating explosion at the Port of Beirut. The explosions magnified the political and economic crises in the country. The already-taxed health care system had been strained under the demands of COVID, but experienced immense pressure following the emergency of injuries resulting from the explosions. With support from Week of Compassion, Global Ministries provided emergency funding for the FDCD to carry out a program of response to the explosions. We also received a significant amount of funds from church members concerned for the needs of several partners, which issued appeals, including the FDCD, the Near East School of Theology, the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East, Haigazian University, the Middle East Council of Churches, and the National Evangelical Church of Beirut. Global Ministries hosted a webinar in November with the president of the Near East School of Theology, Dr. George Sabra, speaking on the

situation following the explosion, as well as the future of theological education in the Middle East.

Palestine

While the US Administration continued to bolster Israeli positions and policies that further marginalize the Palestinian people, the Disciples remained active in 2020 in advocating for peace, justice, and equality in the context of Israel/Palestine. Following Pres. Trump's announcement of the release of the "Peace to Prosperity" proposal for Israel/Palestine, Disciples and UCC leaders issued a joint statement (Jan. 31, 2020) which read, in part, "We do not read the 181-page proposal as either realistic or just. We fear for its devastatingly deleterious effects on Palestinian rights, for its implications for international law and institutions, and for the possible consequences on the people living in an already untenable circumstance. We do not see God's justice in it.... We will continue to support efforts to pursue a just peace and respect the dignity, rights, and value of every person...within the context of international law and justice, and will continue to stand with those who have already suffered too much in the land often called 'holy.'" Additionally in 2020, the Disciples and Global Ministries advocated with Congress, the Trump Administration, and the Biden Transition Team on related issues of the illegality of Israeli settlements, the humanitarian crisis in and blockade of Gaza, and annexation of the West Bank.

Significantly, during this period, our partner Kairos Palestine and its global network issued an urgent "Cry for Hope" on July 1, the date that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu indicated that Israel would move forward on plans to annex major segments of the occupied West Bank. While Israel did not make any such announcement on that date, the "Cry for Hope" spoke to the world about the changes in the context since the original Kairos Palestine document was released in December 2009. The "Cry for Hope" is an effort to garner strong institutional influence to change policies that result in the continuing persecution of Palestinians. The "Cry for Hope" was received by the UCC and Disciples, whose leadership issued a "Message and Call" in response, urging our churches to study and act based on the pleas of the Palestinian letter.

Refugee Ministries

In the Middle East and Europe, the Disciples and Global Ministries continue to support the work of our partners through the appointment and presence of mission co-workers in Hungary, Italy, Greece, Lebanon, Israel/Palestine, Egypt, and Morocco. Their ministries range from refugee assistance and response to peacemaking and conflict resolution, interreligious relations, empowering participation in civic engagement, educational and pastoral ministries, and support for community development programs. While some of our co-workers were not able to remain in their place of service due to the Coronavirus, others have stayed and continued to serve throughout the year, even if affected by various local restrictions.

As the Rev. Dr. Habib Badr, pastor of the National Evangelical Church in Beirut and President of the National Evangelical [Protestant/Reformed] Union in Lebanon, put it, referring to the story of Jesus sleeping while the disciples panicked in the storm on the Sea of Galilee (Mark 4), "Whenever [Jesus] seems asleep, silent, or like He does not care that we are perishing ... whether in these difficult time of Coronavirus, or at any

point in the history of mankind ... Jesus, the one and only, is never tired .. He never sleeps ... nor neglects us ... Even if we think so. He is our God, our protector, and our Savior ... We rely on Him in every circumstance, place and time.” We remain grateful for the opportunity to participate in God’s mission, to accompany our partners, especially in times of challenge and crisis, and to work to enhance global community and pursue justice with the people of the Middle East and Europe and beyond.

SOUTHERN ASIA

Deenabandhu Manchala, Executive

The impact of COVID-19 in the extremely populous region of Southern Asia on the people and communities has been enormous. Along with its vast diversity, the region is also known for its sharp contrasts. It is known for distinct social distances among people and communities based on religion, ethnicity, language and caste, which determine all social, economic and political dynamics. With the indefinite nature of the lockdowns, and with most services and industries shut, and minimal economic activity, millions of people have already lost their sources of employment and are now exposed to hunger and homelessness. What further worsens their plight is the current pervasive trend of supremacist politics that thrives on hatred and division. The scapegoating of religious minorities and the police brutality against the fleeing migrant workers are some such examples. Activists who raise their voices against the treatment of the migrant workers, and their rights amidst the lockdowns are being harassed or incarcerated. In order to ensure that virus is contained, some governments in the region are also turning more authoritarian and repressive. With prolonged exercise of such power, the struggle for life with justice and dignity becomes even more difficult.

These factors form the backdrop of the context in which Global Ministries partners in India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Thailand, Myanmar, Nepal, Cambodia, Indonesia, and East Timor have been proactive in responding to the crisis. The Protestant Church in East Timor, Protestant Evangelical Church in Timor, Church of Christ in Thailand, Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh, and Church’s Auxiliary for Social Action, the Church of South India, Bombay Urban League for Development, Mumbai, Indian Samaritans, and Center for Social Equity and Inclusion in New Delhi, India risked the onslaught of the virus and the dislocations and reached out to those badly affected by the lockdowns.

While we rejoice in their sensitive and committed diaconal engagement, we must also recognize that many churches are now faced with serious financial crisis because of virtual gatherings, lesser giving because of job losses, and reduced funding from international partners. Some of them are in a survival mode and may require more assistance. These challenges besides the social and political dynamics as mentioned above are likely to impact Global Ministries’ partnership dynamics. These also point towards the need of collective effort, more collaboration and sharing of resources and skills, and solidarity.

With international travel possibilities suspended, programming such as pilgrimage visits, events and training workshops could not take place. Vast distances and time

differences also affected possibilities for a more active virtual engagement with partners. Even with the prospect of vaccines, it will take a long time before intra-country and intra-regional visits and events are going to be possible. This has serious implications, but efforts are being made to remain connected and engaged. Besides the pandemic related dislocations, major events and concerns of some of our partners in the region during 2020 are as below:

Sri Lanka

Amidst the pandemic, the Church of the American Ceylon Mission is faced with the challenges of institutional management and the reality of a recently elected rightwing government that seems biased towards the dominant Sinhala-Buddhist majority. The area executive along with ecumenical accompaniers held conversations with the leadership to strengthen their ministries. An ecumenical accompanier from India will begin to work more closely with the ministerial teams beginning in January 2021. A recently organized Prayer Event with the participation of friends in the US was found to be a powerful expression of mutual accompaniment amidst the pandemic.

Indonesia

Global Ministries continues to support key initiatives of the Protestant Church in Sumba, Indonesia including agricultural training for farmers and pastors in organic farming and herbicides; staff development of the Theological School in Lewa (STT, Lewa) in Sumba, Indonesia; and PERUATI - Sumba, a subsidiary of women theologians' network in Indonesia. Global Ministries continues to support GMIT's (Protestant Church in West Timor) House of Hope in Kupang, Indonesia, a shelter for women rescued from traffickers in the Nusa Tenggara region of Indonesia.

East Timor

The area executive continues to accompany and assist the leadership of the Protestant Church in East Timor (IPTL) and its diaconal arm, Fusona. A virtual meeting with the leadership was organized on October 1, 2020. The school in Lisadila has reopened and the clinic in Lospalos has resumed its services. The IPTL organized its quadrennial assembly in October and elected a new panel of officers.

Freedom of Religion

The area executive continues to work with the South Asia Forum for Freedom of Religion or Belief (SAFFORB). National networks in Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are taking shape. The third annual meeting in Bangkok from December 2-6, 2019 was attended by 55 activists from these six countries, Indonesia, the U.S. and Denmark. Its fourth annual meeting in December 2-5, 2020 was virtual. The hope is that the Forum will grow to be a voice for religious minorities in the region and promote the emergence of an open, just and inclusive social and political culture in Asia.

Human Trafficking

The Area Desk continues its work with church-based and civil society organizations addressing the scourge of human trafficking and forced migration in Indonesia, Thailand and Cambodia. The SA Desk is planning to launch a series of training workshops for churches engaged in anti-human trafficking efforts.

Together in Hope: Southern Asia Initiative

The Southern Asia Initiative 2019-20 took off under the overarching theme of *Together in Hope* with special focus on four challenges of Human Trafficking, Violence against religious minorities, Social discrimination, and Climate change. Some members of the CGMB visited Sri Lanka and India in September 2019, and the leadership of three churches – United Church of Christ, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Church of Canada visited Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and India in January 2020. Two additional visits had to be cancelled because of the pandemic. Eden Theological Seminary, St. Louis dedicated its Annual “Schmiechen Lecture” Day (for public theology) for the Southern Asia Initiative. These well-attended virtual sessions on October 7, 2020 focused on the distinct challenges posed by the pandemic with inputs from partners in the region. The Southern Asia Initiative’s coordination team continues to work hard offering many educational and inspirational resources to ensure that the churches – United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) make use of this space and opportunity to learn about and to be engaged with the challenges and initiatives of partners in the region, now extended until June 2021.

The pandemic has further reinforced the urgency of advocacy and capacity building around issues of Anti-Human trafficking, casteism and racism, violence against religious minorities, increased domestic violence and further impoverishment of women, and the impact of climate change. These continue to be the core points of engagement with all partners and their projects. These also form the content of much of the work being done as part of the Southern Asia Initiative.

MISSION ENGAGEMENT

Marcy Gansler, Executive

Bethany Guy, Director of Communications

Brande Midgett-Crosby, Communications Associate

The Global Ministries Office of Mission Engagement works to provide resources for individuals, congregations, and regions in the United States and Canada to connect with global partners and mission co-workers. Even with the challenges of COVID-19 throughout 2020, the Office of Mission Engagement worked to create opportunities for global connection.

Resources created and shared during the year 2020 include:

Articles and videos from global partners on how they are experiencing and addressing COVID-19

Stories from mission co-workers on what they have experienced and witnessed related to COVID-19

Area Update Videos from Area Executives on COVID-19

A collection of COVID-19 prayers from mission co-workers and Global Ministries staff

Messages of solidarity and support from global partners regarding the Black Lives Matter movement

A devotional on the Beatitudes focused on the Southern Asia Initiative

Congo Week resources including videos, articles, and an audio interview

Virtual pilgrimage to Cuba video collection

Webinars featuring partners

A virtual conference on the Venezuela election and political situation

A new Southern Asia Initiative VBS and ideas on how to adapt it for virtual use

Videos of presentations from mission co-workers

Videos of sermons from mission co-workers

A video created for the Disciples of Christ Just Summer

The above resources accompanied regularly produced resources including:

- Weekly Prayers and mission stories written by mission co-workers
- Weekly update email from Global Ministries
- News from global partners
- Social media posts

These resources and more may be found on the Global Ministries website. Please contact the Office of Mission Engagement at bguy@dom.disciples.org to request materials or learn more.

Global Advocacy and Education

Krista Johnson Weicksel, Program Associate, DOM

Rebekah Choate, Program Associate, UCC Wider Church Ministries

The Global Advocacy and Education program provides leadership in implementing the Global Ministries strategic direction “Working for Peace with Justice.” The responsibilities of the associates include networking and collaborating with denominational, ecumenical and advocacy partners on global concerns, including the need for just peace, addressing hunger and food insecurity, protecting vulnerable communities from climate change, confronting human trafficking, supporting refugees and migrants, and securing the rights of women and children, indigenous peoples, and other minorities. Many of these major advocacy themes are promoted and resourced by identifying special advocacy dates to highlight these issues and mobilize grassroots response. The advocacy associates also coordinate with the area offices in relation to regional justice issues that are of concern to our global partners and the communities they serve. Responses are guided by the actions and positions of our partners. Opportunities to take action in response to regional or global advocacy concerns include awareness-raising on the website and using social media; through supporting letters, statements and solidarity actions by denominational leaders; engaging Disciples members in ecumenical advocacy campaigns and initiatives; and by resourcing board and General Assembly actions.

This past year was different than the Global Advocacy and Education team anticipated. The pandemic shifted work to virtual gatherings. There were some unexpected advantages to this time of working virtually and remotely. It has allowed the associates to attend more working group meetings and to participate more fully in working groups based in Washington, DC and New York City. Another welcome shift was the number of video updates received and shared from partners and the opportunity for partners to engage in virtual webinars and even virtual pilgrimages.

A cornerstone advocacy event Global Ministries sponsors is the annual Ecumenical Advocacy Days (EAD). The associates played a key role in planning denomination-specific programming for participants and on the EAD leadership team. The 2020 Ecumenical Advocacy Days in-person conference in April was cancelled due to the pandemic and replaced by a webinar. The associates are involved in planning for another virtual Ecumenical Advocacy Days, scheduled for April 18-21, 2021 with the theme “Imagine! God’s Earth and People Restored” with a focus on climate justice.

The advocacy office represents DOM on the boards of the Disciples Center for Public Witness and the Disciples Peace Fellowship promoting collaboration with other justice ministries. The associate participates in the Disciples Justice Ministries working group, working to create stronger collaboration among the Justice Ministries of the denomination. Through the Disciples Justice Ministries, the associates produced materials for the Disciples of Christ Summer of Justice and facilitated a virtual conversation with seasoned DOC legislative advocates about how to carry out virtual legislative advocacy visits with members of Congress.

Africa

The associates worked on releasing a robust set of resources for Congo Week in October including daily video updates from partners and mission co-workers, an advocacy brief focused on the UN Mapping Report, a cooking demonstration, worship resources and a call to action on conflict minerals. Resources can be found at www.globalministries.org/congo_week. Global Ministries will continue to work with partners to support democracy, peace, and human rights in the Congo and in the region.

East Asia and the Pacific

The associates continued to provide support for implementing the 2015 Disciples resolution “A Call for Peace, Justice and Reunification in the Korean Peninsula.” The year 2020 marked the 70th anniversary of the start of the Korean War, a number of virtual events were held, and international partners joined Korean churches in calling attention to the need for an official peace agreement. Peace and human rights in the Philippines continues to be a priority for Global Ministries’ advocacy and has been focused on indigenous peoples’ rights and monitoring the extra-judicial killings and human rights abuses that have occurred under the Duterte government’s war on drugs and war as well as the pandemic laws that have been used as cover for human rights abuses. Global Ministries has also been supporting partners working for peace and dialogue in Hong Kong during this tumultuous year.

Latin America and the Caribbean

The associates focused on relations with Venezuela in 2020, especially as U.S. rhetoric and threats of intervention increased. The associates piloted a legislative contact tool, called Capitol Contact, in collaboration with the Disciples Center for Public Witness, to collect signatures from Disciples calling on members of Congress to end sanctions against Venezuela, respect the self-determination of the Venezuelan people and to refrain from any U.S. military intervention in Venezuela. The associates continue to closely monitor U.S. relations with Cuba and to speak out against additional travel restrictions and state sponsor of terrorism designation from the Trump administration.

Peace and Justice in Colombia continues to be a key advocacy focus for Global Ministries and the associates participate in the Colombia partnership and joined the virtual pilgrimage to Colombia hosted by Global Ministries. The associates anticipate continuing to collaborate with Days of Prayer and Action for Colombia (DOPA) with advocacy, education and worship materials.

Middle East and Europe

The associates have continued to focus on peace, human rights, and demilitarization throughout the region. Global Ministries has spoken out against U.S. administration policies and plans that destabilize the region particularly the “Peace to Prosperity” Middle East peace plan. Likewise, Global Ministries has been active in expressing concerns about the 2020 Caesar Act’s provisions and the anticipated impact of additional sanctions on vulnerable Syrians. Global Ministries has engaged in COVID-related advocacy related to the Gaza blockades and medical shortages and helped to facilitate two webinars with partners from the region, one after the Beirut blast and one about the new Kairos Palestine document.

Southern Asia

Human trafficking continues to be a focus of partners in the region along with advocating for the rights of marginalized groups. The associates are part of the planning team for the Southern Asia Initiative extended through mid-2021. The advocacy priorities for the Initiative are human trafficking, caste-based discrimination, migrant workers, climate change, and the rights of religious minorities. In 2020, the associates wrote advocacy issue papers, called *Contextos*, related to each priority.

MISSION PERSONNEL

Catherine Nichols, Executive

As a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world, the Division of Overseas Ministries/Global Ministries participates in ministries, which attempt to break the divide among God’s people by partnering with churches and church-related organizations in the sending and receiving of mission co-workers. The exchange of people and their gifts unites us across geographical, racial, gender, and economic barriers. A critical component of this ministry includes the presence of mission co-workers serving around the world and then sharing the story in congregations, allowing congregations to share in the vital ministries of the partner churches. This component was challenged in new ways in 2020, as we had to bring many personnel home from their placements because of COVID-19. At the same time, mission co-workers were able to participate in new and exciting ways with local congregations as the technology allowed for co-workers, both at home and around the world, to participate in the life of the church.

Mission Personnel

Through the Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ, mission co-workers are participating in ministries of critical presence around the world. They are engaged in a variety of ministries including theological education, leadership development, community and development work, human rights, health ministries, children’s ministries, and pastoral ministries.

A total of 93 mission co-workers served in 42 countries in 2020, serving in the following categories: 29 fully-supported mission co-workers; 13 global service workers (long-term volunteers); 11 global mission interns; and 39 global associates. The distribution of mission co-workers by area: Africa, 12; East Asia and the Pacific, 22; Middle East and Europe, 30; Latin America and the Caribbean, 21; and Southern Asia, 7. In addition, 3 individuals served as short-term volunteers (one remotely) as the short-term volunteer program was put on hold due to COVID as of early March.

Due to the outbreak of the corona virus, the following people were evacuated from their sites of service: Kahala Cannon (Eswatini); Mark and Danielle Murry-Knowles (Lesotho); Kaitlin Thompson (Dominican Republic); Abigail Fate (Mexico); Sean Amato (Egypt); Carlos Sediles and Cindy Moraga (Mexico); Fiyori Kidane (Greece); Kelsey and Dustin Riebel (Ecuador); and Ignacio Salinas (Nicaragua).

Eleven persons were appointed to church and/or church-related institutions around the world, including three re-appointees. Terms varied from fully-supported to Global Service Workers. This distribution by area of total appointments was Africa 4; East Asia and the Pacific 3; Europe 0; Latin America and the Caribbean 1; Middle East 2; Southern Asia 1.

Four new fully-supported Mission Co-workers were appointed or re-appointed in 2020: Bosela Eale, Kenya, Phyllis Byrd, Kenya, Rebecca Young, Indonesia, and Bryan Parrish, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Three new global mission interns were appointed through Week of Compassion funds in 2019: Leda Zakarison, Lebanon, RJ Howard, Fiji, and Lydia Yang, Korea. Four new Global Service Workers (one year or longer) were appointed or re-appointed during 2020: Brigitte Eale, Kenya, Guangyu Lou, China, Sean Amato, Egypt; and Wally Burman, Costa Rica.

There were 3 short-term volunteers (two weeks to eleven months) appointed in 2020. List of names and term dates are available upon request. This program was curtailed due to COVID-19.

The overseas associate category is a recognition normally given to members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ who are serving outside of the United States and Canada with a church, ecumenical institution or project that involves a ministry that is in accordance with the mission principles of the Common Global Ministries Board. There were six new associate appointments in 2020: Lydia Hill Johnson, New Zealand, Hannah Cranbury, Germany, Michael Joseph and Yazmin Novelo, Mexico, Paul Turner, DROC, and Kelly Gilson, New Zealand.

Four individuals completed their service with Global Ministries in the category of fully-supported appointees: Judy Chan, Hong Kong, Monica and Thomas Liddle, East Timor and Jeanette Salley, Zambia who passed away (see Africa report).

Three Global Mission Interns completed their service in 2020: Dusty Riebel, Ecuador, Kelsey Riebel, Ecuador and Fiyori Kidane, Greece.

Two individuals completed their service as Global Service Workers in 2020: Carmelo Alvarez, Venezuela; Ignacio Salinas, Nicaragua and Marilyn Cooper, Ecuador.

Mission Co-worker Relationships and Visits

From January 1 2020 – December 31, 2020, 18 mission co-workers and one mission co-worker in residence were involved in a ministry of presence through mission co-worker visits and relationship building. These itineration visits, with the exception of those that took place before March, occurred in new virtual frameworks. Initially, it was limited to those home on assignment and expanded as mission co-workers were evacuated due to COVID 19. Beyond traditional church visits, presentations of mission co-workers including the work of partners were recorded and placed on the Global Ministries website along with a sermon bank developed for congregations that needed pulpit supply. This enabled mission co-workers to go above and beyond the scheduled in-person events.

The presentations listed below excludes the use of those recorded resources and only identifies those “live” presentations through some virtual or in-person format: Tom and Monica Liddle, East Timor, (7 months); Rebecca Young, Indonesia, (2 months) ; Abigail Fate, Mexico, (4 months); Kaitlin Thompson, Dominican Republic (4 months); Dustin and Kelsey Riebel, Ecuador (2 months); Kahala Cannon, eSwatini (2 months); Mark and Danielle Knowles, Lesotho (4 months), Fiyori Kidane, Greece (1 month); Phyllis Byrd, Kenya (3 months); Michelle McKay, Haiti (2 months); RJ Howard, Fiji (2 months), Sean Amato (2 months).

Additionally, mission co-workers serving in their placements assisted in virtual itineration including:

Andrew Larsen, Philippines; Elena Huegel, Mexico; and Nishan and Maria Bakalian, Lebanon.

There was one mission-in-residence visit during this period: Lisania Martinez, from the Disciples of Christ, Mexico, spoke at the regional women’s “SERF” gathering as the keynote speaker and visited three churches in the North Carolina region before being evacuated back to Mexico in mid-March.

From January 2 – December 31, 2020, 20 UCC Conferences and 17 Disciples Regions received visits. There were a total of 84 mission co-worker presentations made along with many others who used the virtual resources. These presentations continued to affirm the tremendous work of God’s people around the world.

People-to-People Pilgrimage Program

Lorna B. Hernández, Director

The People-to-People Pilgrimage Program encourages and assists congregations, regions, conferences, and other related organizations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada and the United Church of Christ to live out Global Ministries’ mission of receiving and sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ by joining with international partners. Pilgrimages are transforming experiences where

participants receive and share God's love while walking with international partners, sharing their joys, and understanding their challenges.

Pilgrimages

Eleven pilgrimages were successfully organized and carried out between January 2020 and February 2020. These pilgrimages took place in the following countries: Bangladesh, Chile, Cuba, Ecuador, Haiti (2), India (2), Israel/Palestine (2), Paraguay, and Sri Lanka.

COVID-19

The pandemic of the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, deeply affected the People to People program. Recognizing the importance of maintaining the health and safety of international partners and pilgrims and with a sense of great responsibility, following Jesus' second commandment of "Love your neighbor as yourself," the Program postponed all pilgrimages scheduled from March 2020 through December 2020 to protect vulnerable and overwhelmed global communities. Initially, a statement was released to postpone pilgrimages through May 2020. A second statement was released in June 2020 moving the postponement date to December 2020.

Virtual Pilgrimages

The Program remained strong in its commitment of bringing people together to love and support one another as God's children. New opportunities for "virtual pilgrimages" were developed as an alternative to traditional, in-person pilgrimages. The *Virtual Pilgrimage to Cuba* was released in the summer months as a series of videos to be enjoyed individually or used in church groups, and the *Virtual Pilgrimage for Peace in Colombia* took place in September 2020, around the International Day of Peace, with participants from the Pacific Northwest Conference and Northern Lights Region.

Child and Elder Sponsorship

Linda Lawrence, Program Manager

The Child Sponsorship Program is the international children and elder ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ. The program works hand in hand with partners that have established children and or elder programs and require financial assistance to continue to provide services to their constituents in their respective communities. We share the responsibility of caring for children and elders who are struggling for justice and human dignity in their countries. As Christians, sponsors demonstrate the church's critical presence by aiding children and elders with various educational and physical needs.

In the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, sponsorship staff became concerned regarding giving to the program. Many churches have dedicated ways to raise the cost of their sponsorship from extra programming. However, with congregations meeting virtual because of the pandemic, those projects had to be cancelled. Notes were sent to sponsors over the summer to serve as a reminder of their commitment to aid children and elders; to build, maintain and inspire a better connection to the ministry. The United Church of Christ Three Great Loves mission highlighted the Child and Elder Sponsorship program by advertising on Facebook and Instagram.

The number of cases with COVID-19 was increasing in all the areas with sponsorship centers. Relief assistance was provided by the sponsorship office for masks, drinking water and other items needed in the communities. Sponsored children often come from families where parents are still not working because of the pandemic. Additionally, many of the sponsorship sites expressed their concern about the Coronavirus pandemic in the United States. Together the Global Ministries Child and Elder Sponsorship and sponsorship centers will continue mutually supporting children and elders.

THE RAMBO COMMITTEE

Landa Simmons, Board Chair

In 2020, the Rambo Committee continued its support of both the Christian Hospital in Mungeli, India and the Vocational School for the Blind in Ludhiana, India. Thanks to current donors and endowments from long-time supporters of the work of Dr. Victor Rambo, the committee was able to pay down the debt owed by a senior batch of nursing students and allow them to move forward in their careers. We believe that the education of one young woman will change the life of her entire family for generations. In addition, the Christian Hospital of Mungeli has rebuilt the chapel that was destroyed on Good Friday, 2018. The Rambo Committee made a donation to assist with the flooring for the new chapel, the symbolic heart of the campus.

DISCIPLES AMATEUR RADIO FELLOWSHIP, INC.

John Park Winkler, Jr, President
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In 2020, the Board of Directors of the Disciples Amateur Radio Fellowship (DARF) voted to dissolve the Corporation and transfer its assets to the Division of Overseas Ministries.

Since Jim Sugioka convened its organizational meeting at the 1958 International Convention, DARF has provided Radio and communications equipment and technical expertise for Disciples overseas mission work. In 2015, DARF completed a fourth generation HF communications system in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). That system consisted of 26 solar-powered HF radio stations linking the Principle Supervisory Posts for the Disciples Community. A team from DARF traveled in 2010 to the DRC to conduct a seminar to teach church leaders how to install the stations.

Over the years, DARF provided equipment for Disciples related mission work in Paraguay, the Philippines, Swaziland, Lesotho, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Guatemala. Amateur Radio networks lead by Disciples "Hams" provided communications support for overseas mission co-workers, as well as fellowship and camaraderie within the United States, Australia and New Zealand. For now, DARF continues to meet for fellowship on the 20 and 75-meter amateur radio bands and using Skype.

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(date indicates end of term)

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Megan Lowe, TN, '24

—Clinical Pharmacist

Selena Reyes-Martínez, FL, '24

—Chaplin