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2026 CCSW Regional Report to the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Board Moderator:

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Major Accomplishments

In 2025 the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Southwest focused on forming healthy leaders, deepening our anti-racism work, planting new ministries, and strengthening congregational outreach.

New Healthy Boundaries Curriculum

Our region launched a new Healthy Boundaries training with a renewed emphasis on the theology of the Representational Minister and on clergy self-stewardship, supported by a Sacred Self-Care series open to ministers across Texas and New Mexico.

Clergy Anti-Racism Education Curriculum

We also completed a new Clergy Anti-Racism Education Curriculum (CARE), which will be presented by regional staff and a newly commissioned cohort of Southwest anti-racism trainers, equipping pastors and lay leaders to lead congregations toward more just and inclusive ministry.

New Church Start

2025 was also a year of new life and community witness. We celebrated the birth of a new congregation in San Marcos, Springs of Life, a worshiping community committed to reaching neighbors who have not always seen themselves reflected in church life and to embodying Christ's welcome in a growing college town.

Impact Grants.

Through CCSW Impact Grants, income from invested funds provided more than \$200,000 in grants to congregations across the region, empowering ministries such as neighborhood meal programs, after-school and arts initiatives for children and youth, immigrant and refugee support, and the revitalization of camp and retreat ministries. In addition, more than \$12,000 in Food Ministry Grants helped congregations expand food pantries, weekend backpack programs, and community gardens that address food insecurity in both urban and rural communities.

Hope for 2026

Our hope for 2026 centers on gathering as one body for the Regional Assembly in Fort Worth, November 6–7, under the theme “Jubilee.” This Assembly will mark the fiftieth anniversary of the first Regional Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Southwest, when the Christian Churches in Texas and New Mexico merged in the early 1970s and held their first Southwest Regional Assembly in 1976. It will also celebrate ten years of our “Create One

Region” initiative, as we present a new regional design, bylaws, and charter that embody the unity we have been prayerfully working toward for nearly a decade.

Jubilee is more than an anniversary slogan; it is a theological vision for our shared life. Rooted in faith in God our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, Jubilee calls us to just and equitable use of resources and to faithful covenant relationships with one another. As we gather in Fort Worth, we hope to renew our commitments to shared ministry across geography, language, culture, and generation, trusting that the Spirit is still making all things new among the congregations of the Southwest.

Challenges Ahead

We face significant challenges familiar across the wider Church. Many congregations are discerning how to sustain ministry in the midst of aging facilities, shifting neighborhoods, and limited financial and human resources, including fewer full-time pastoral leaders. We continue to navigate the long-term impacts of the pandemic on worship patterns and volunteer engagement, even as we seek new forms of digital and in-person connection.

Our commitment to anti-racism, pro-reconciling ministry asks us to tell the truth about our history, to confront disparities in how resources are shared, and to build leadership that reflects the full breadth of our region. We are faced with how best to welcome immigrants and refugees. While our primary point of ministry relative to immigrant and refugee services is at Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries, we are all living in an increasingly polarized and divisive culture and needing to. At the same time, our wide geography means that rural, small-town, and urban congregations often experience these pressures differently, requiring adaptive approaches to regional support, creative uses of technology, and deep partnerships with ecumenical and community partners.

A Story of Strength and Hope

One story that embodies the resilience and imagination of our congregations comes from a historic downtown church in Abilene. After decades of faithful ministry in a beautiful but increasingly expensive facility, the congregation realized that maintaining the building was limiting its ability to respond to the needs of its community. Trusting God’s future more than a familiar past, the church made the difficult decision to leave its long-time home and relocate to a smaller facility on the south side of town, closer to growing neighborhoods and new ministry opportunities.

The new space was more modest and, at first, not fully adequate for all the ministries the congregation envisioned. Yet the people remained steadfast in worship, outreach, and discipleship, investing in relationships with neighbors rather than in square footage. Their pastor, Rev. Greg Morris, and their faithful lay-leadership have a commitment to being a Disciple-making congregation both inside and out. They partner with Wylie High School and the entire Wylie Independent School District. They continue their Breakfast on Beach (BOBs) a food ministry. Houses of Healing providing short-term housing for individuals and families going through medical care mainly by providing transportation for medical appointments. They sponsor a major Trunk or Treat every year. They partner with Meals on Wheels. They have a

Chess club sharing intergenerational enjoyment of chess. They host a large Over time, the congregation has grown in spirit and number, developing new ministries and welcoming new members who might never have entered their former downtown building. In 2025 they broke ground on a new physical plant on their new property, creating space designed for the congregation they are becoming and the community they now serve.

Their story mirrors what we see in many Southwest congregations: willingness to release what no longer serves the gospel, courage to move toward places of greater missional impact, and trust that God will provide what is needed for the next chapter. As General Board members share this story in their own contexts, we hope it will encourage other congregations who are discerning bold steps—reminding us all that when we follow Christ into new places, the Spirit meets us there with surprising joy and growth.

Submitted by:
Andy Mangum,
CCSW Regional Minister and President