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Report to the General Board 2026

Our theme, along with West Virginia, for 2026 is “Our Roots Run Deep”. This is recognition that God’s provision for us is extensive and that we sit in the shade of trees we did not plant. Our cups are full and we continue to be poured into. One of our holy tasks is to recognize and rejoice in this reality in visibly tangible ways. Our clergy, members, board and congregations are gifts and signs of a deeply rooted life that we live and share in common with the Saints of all time and place.

Last year we shared that a recent addition to our staff is the role of an Associate for Gun Violence Prevention. This position signifies a commitment to this social justice speciality and is a continuation of good work that the region has been doing in this area. We expected to offer leadership to the denomination and to the broader church and world through this ministry that is literally about life and death. Building capacity for this work has been and will be a theme and action item for the coming years. But we have not wasted any time. We have a team that meets monthly and we are active in advocacy circles in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and beyond. We have created a curriculum that is offered to the whole church without charge. We have hosted tables at assemblies, seminars in congregations, support for camps, and have shared with Bethany College classes. The roots of this new ministry run deep. We pray it will bless the world and bring peace.

A hope for 2026 is to increase the visible ministry of Jane Campbell McKeever and Thomas Campbell who were important early members of our regional church. These staunch abolitionists are part of our story and we are desirous of being nourished for our work and witness in a fragmented world by the deep roots of our heritage. We are in the midst of reclaiming real estate that was important to this family’s work in West Middletown, Pennsylvania. We hope that it will serve as a living memorial and destination site for those exploring and making pilgrimage to our historic sites and deeply rooted church story.

Our challenges are many. We are concerned about the divide in Christianity and the temptation of congregations to disaffiliate with the denomination. It is a fierce fight when this evil arrives on

the scene. Bringing our best to conversations and making a place where all feel welcome and wanted will require thoughtfulness, care, time and energy if we are to live into what we believe about a church that is essentially, intentionally and constitutionally one.

In West Philadelphia lives a beautiful congregation that goes by the name of Fellowship Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). They have been leaders in our gun violence prevention work both locally and regionally. We recently held a history and polity course designed for pastors who are coming to the Disciples, but that was also geared for elders, deacons and inquirers as well. They had 11 members participate and successfully complete the course! If you need prayer or care, I suggest reaching out to them. They take the prayer life of the church seriously and care for people very very well.

Our roots run deep. Our region has much to be thankful for and we have much work to do. We are grateful for the support that is offered by all who accompany us on the holy road we travel together. We are grateful for the kinship that exists with neighboring regions. Our partnership across judicatories affords us the reality of having the tools for regional ministry that big regions have while in reality being a region with micro capacity in terms of temporal resources. Regional life continues to be an offering of love and devotion to the Risen Christ in whose presence and peace we stand.