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The West Virginia Region
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Report to the General Board 2026

The Christian Church in West Virginia is marked by strong leadership. This is certainly true in the Order of Ministry and is also true for the Laos, the whole people of God. We are blessed with almost full employment across our parishes. The clergy shows up in positive ways for weekly zoom meetings as we consider life in the church and world. Together we seek to improve the effectiveness and capacity of and in the servants of the Servant Church.

A celebration to share is that we are active leaders in the Ecumenical Movement in West Virginia. In particular, we are leaders in the ecumenical life of our excellent and robust state council of churches. This body works for unity in the church and is also a source of light and enlightenment in public policy debate and in advocating for better lives across our population, especially with those on the margins and subjected to economic injustice. Our Regional Minister is the President of the Board of Directors, and our Wheeling pastor chairs the Faith and Order Commission. We have recently called a new Executive Director and the Disciples have played an over sized role in the search process and in the robust on boarding that the Council is undertaking. Interviews were held at our parish in the state capital where the pastor of Charleston United orchestrated top shelf hospitality. We still believe that Christian Unity is our "Polar Star."

While our demographics point to an older and poorer state, we are finding continued evidence that we are endowed with young adults who were formed in our region who are engaged and engaging the world in beautiful life giving ways. Our challenge is to engage this part of our church family more strategically and to highlight the witness they are making in our midst. Our excellent Disciples Women's ministry is bringing in speakers for events and retreats from our 35 and under demographic. We are also highlighting many in our weekly news lifting up testimonials for the church about the importance regional church life has played in their lives. The challenge is to keep close to these saints and to not lose hope about our future and very present as well.

While we have several congregations that are experience new life and vitality, I point us to Bethany Memorial Church in Bethany, West Virginia. This quietly mighty flock serves as a lighthouse for the community and for Bethany College students who are journeying through during a most formative time of their lives. Students are nurtured, cared for, and encouraged in all of the

ways that we could hope for. The parish, too, serves as a place of hospitality for groups coming to tour and work on historic and sacred sites. They take seriously the call to be Gospel people. They are Salt and they are Light!

We celebrate that we continue living in a formal staff sharing partnership with the Pennsylvania Region. Twelve years of two regions with one staff continues to be a sign of grace in our midst. 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.