



# The Chalice



*Linking Congregations in Partnership, Sharing the Life, Hope and Message of Jesus Christ*

Vol. 15 No. 4

Bluebonnet Area/Lower Rio Grande Valley District of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Southwest Region

April 2011

## **A message from our Area Minister . . .**

You can be a Saint today . . .

William Stringfellow said of saints, "Contrary to many legends, the saints are not spooky figures, morally superior, abstentious, and pietistic. They are seldom remembered, much less haloed. In truth, all human beings are called to be saints, but that just means called to be fully human.....The saints are simply those men and women who relish the events of life as a gift and who realize that the only way to honor such a gift is to give it away..." I like Stringfellow's view of Saints. We are a blessed people living in a blessed land. We more than most can gratefully honor our good fortune by giving some of it to others.

Having lived in Japan for three years heightens my interest in the epic human tragedy unfolding there. There was a striking image on the evening news this week. Amid the rubble of total destruction brought by the earth quake and tsunami a group of displaced and distressed survivors huddled against the cold around an open fire; they had lost everything but their lives. They were heating water and cooking what meager food supplies they could find. As an ABC camera crew approached, one of the group stood, bowed to greet the crew and offered to share the little food they had. It was a remarkable scene. Sometimes the worst of circumstances brings out the best of character. It is a matter of the spirit; we almost always have enough to share.

You are represented in Japan. Global Ministries, the combined world mission of the United Church of Christ and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has three mission personnel serving in Japan. Martha Mensendiek and Casilda Luzares are professors at Doshisha University in Kyoto. Jeffery Mensendiek, Martha's brother, is the Youth Director, at the Emmaus Center in Sendai. An update this week indicates that Jeffery's family has relocated to Kyoto due to the risk of radiation in Sendai. The Emmaus Center is becoming a center for relief and recovery efforts. As we move through the days toward Easter, find the time to pray for our missionaries in these dark days, pray for the life and welfare of the struggling people of Japan, and share a bit. It is your day to be a Saint.

Allen C. Allen

### **Prayer Partner Church of the Week**

April 3	FCC Portland	All the People, Ministers	(361) 643-2864
April 10	La Trinidad CC	Aurelio Lopez Turino, Pastor	(361) 883-2093
April 17	IC Roca de Salvacion	Gilberto Trinidad, Pastor	(210) 310-0530
April 24	Koenig Lane CC	Mark Friesen, pastor	(512) 454-7679

# What Is The BBA?

## *It's You*

As a member of a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) congregation you are united in ministry with hundreds of Disciples in the more than 70 congregations from Georgetown to Brownsville and Victoria to Del Rio that are the Bluebonnet Area of the Christian Church in the Southwest. Through your participation and financial support you...

- **Collaborate on ministries** that no single church can accomplish. The most prominent of these is our camp and conference program, in which the faith of children, youth and adults throughout the area is strengthened. Another such ministry is new church development, where the resources of the many are used to support new congregations reaching new people with Christ's love and grace.
- **Support congregations** in their times of need, transition or stress. It is difficult being the church today. Congregations have to say goodbye to one pastor and search for another. Some struggle with conflict while others seek new ways to minister. As the Bluebonnet Area, you are there to help through the work of the area minister, who is available to guide congregations or provide needed resources.
- **Strengthening ministers** for their vital role in the congregation. Did you know that your pastor has a pastor? He or she does in the Bluebonnet Area minister. Did you know that there are four dozen licensed ministers serving area churches? There are, and each has been or is being mentored by an experienced, ordained pastor so that he or she might be a faithful and effective servant. Did you know that you partner with congregations to ordain seminary trained pastors? You do, assuring congregations here and elsewhere that those who proclaim the Gospel and serve God's people are spiritually prepared.
- **Connect congregations, clergy and laypersons** so that we can celebrate each others joys, grieve each others losses, learn from each others experiences and share each others dreams. By providing area and cluster events, the website and other opportunities to connect, you unite Bluebonnet Area Disciples in faith, hope and ministry.

So what is the Bluebonnet Area?

***It's You!***

If you would like to know more about what you are doing in ministry through the Bluebonnet Area, contact the Rev. Allen C. Allen, transitional area minister; Don Tuttle, the BBA moderator; or visit the BBA website at [bluebonnetarea.org](http://bluebonnetarea.org).



**Bluebonnet Area**  
**of the Christian Church in the Southwest**  
**1744 W Gramercy Place**  
**San Antonio, TX 78201**  
**210-822-4345 (phone)**  
**[bba@ccsw.org](mailto:bba@ccsw.org)**

## **CONGRATULATIONS TO FCC KINGSVILLE**

Recently First Christian Church, Kingsville received their Historical Designation and their historical marker is on its way. Please take the time to call or email them and congratulate them.

Terry Neel, Pastor  
(361) 592-4911  
[kingsvillefcc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kingsvillefcc@sbcglobal.net)



## Crises in Japan and Your Gifts in Action

Following the March 11th earthquake and tsunami that struck Japan, the island nation is facing multiple crises, including the increased threat of radiation exposure from several nuclear power plants. The official death toll has risen to 2,722 people and is expected to increase.

More than 400,000 people are now living in makeshift shelters or evacuation centers, according to *The New York Times*. Compounding the problem is windy and bitterly cold weather, as well as shortages of water, food and fuel, *The Times* reported. But the chief concern remains radiation, as a third nuclear reactor blast occurred today.

Through the joint [Global Ministries](#) of the Disciples of Christ and United Church of Christ, Week of Compassion's primary partner in Japan is the United Church of Christ in Japan (UCCJ). Several mission appointees serve there, teaching ESL or working with local churches.



UCCJ has established a relief committee which is currently researching and planning an appropriate response. UCCJ has also provided a status update on their churches, many of which were damaged or destroyed. Your gifts to Week of Compassion have already gone to support the UCCJ efforts.

Your gifts will also support a collaborative effort between our partner Church World Service and the Japan Platform, a coalition of 32 non-governmental organizations, government service agencies and media outlets in Japan. CWS will be providing support and channeling contributions to individual members of the Japan Platform, and is also prepared to support efforts of faith-based partners in Japan, including the National Christian Council of Japan.

We are grateful for your gifts of Courageous Compassion for the people of Japan--should you feel moved to contribute to this relief effort, [please donate online](#).

## "COOL" T-Shirt Proceeds Will go to Japan Relief Effort

Proceeds from [the "Love Your Neighbor" line of shirts, posters, and stickers](#) will be given to Week of Compassion's Response Fund to be donated to the victims of the recent earthquake and tsunami in Japan.



Created by designer Ty Mattson in order to help promote a benefit concert for Nashville flood relief, the "Love Your Neighbor" idea speaks to the universal desire in each of us to make the world a better place for those nearby. In the aftermath of the flood that hit Nashville in May of 2010, volunteers have demonstrated what it means to love one's neighbor as thousands of individuals have pitched in to help flood victims rebuild their homes and their lives.

Shirts are printed on a light green 100% organic cotton shirt, are printed in an environmentally-safe way, and are available in men's and women's sizes.

### This Week's Responses

#### Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance

Japan, earthquake/tsunami  
Colombia, flood relief  
Brazil, flood/landslide relief  
Oklahoma, wildfire damage

For a full listing of responses made this year, [click here](#).

*Thanks to Chris Herlinger of Church World Service for much of the information on Japan.*

*Week of Compassion is sharing resources and changing lives. Thank you for sharing your resources and helping to change lives.*

Dear Friend of Christian Unity,

In this Lenten Season, I greet you in the Name of Jesus the Christ, with gratitude for your witness and ministry, and particularly for your generous support of the General Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

As President of the Council on Christian Unity, I thank God every day for the honor of being entrusted to be a steward of our congregations' offerings with the purpose of transforming those resources into acts of reconciliation and unity in witness to God's gift of oneness in Christ.

As we prepare once again to celebrate the Risen Christ, I am writing today to urge you and your congregation to generously support this year's Easter Offering, which goes 100% to the general ministries of our church. The offering is scheduled to take place on Sunday, April 17 and Sunday, April 24. This offering goes 100% in support of the general ministries and racial ethnic ministries of our church.

Your gifts to the Easter Offering extend God's love all across North America and around the world as dollars are translated into **ministries that make a difference** in:

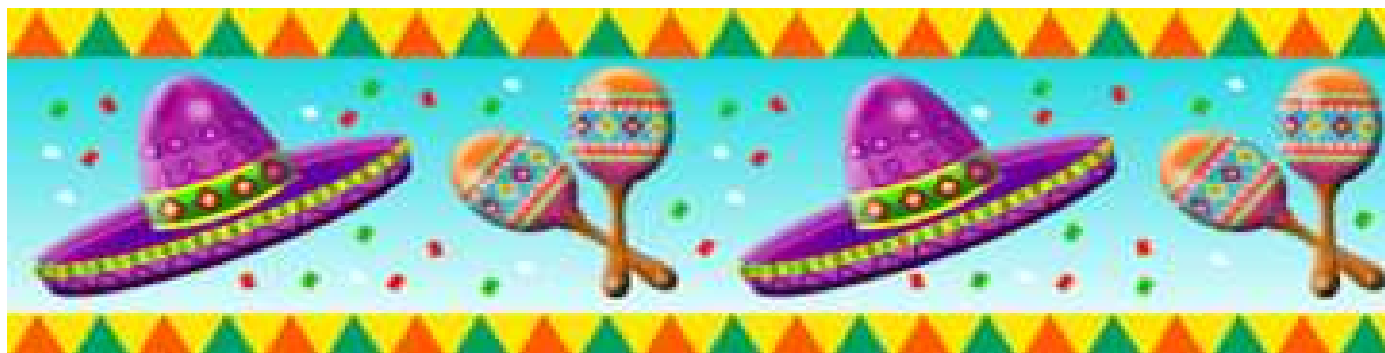
- \* supporting congregations in transition with programs of renewal and transformation;
- \* reinforcing the witness of African-American, Hispanic, and Asian American ministries in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ);
- \* making possible the service of more than 125 missionaries and strengthen relationships with 270 partner churches in over 70 countries around the world;
- \* providing "over and above" financial support to retired pastors and missionaries who receive only minimum pension benefits;
- \* facilitating resources and programs of evangelism and church growth, especially with those with no church involvement;
- \* nurturing youth, young adults and seminarians in the living out of their faith, their academic studies, and short-term practical internships; and,
- \* preserving and honoring our history and lasting legacy as a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world.

Your congregation should have received a supply of promotional materials. If you need additional supplies, please contact Gerri Lynn Reeves at [greeves@ogmp.disciples.org](mailto:greeves@ogmp.disciples.org) or 317-713-2444.

Thank you for your support to me, to the CCU, and to our church's wider ministries!

With best wishes and God's blessings,

Robert Welsh

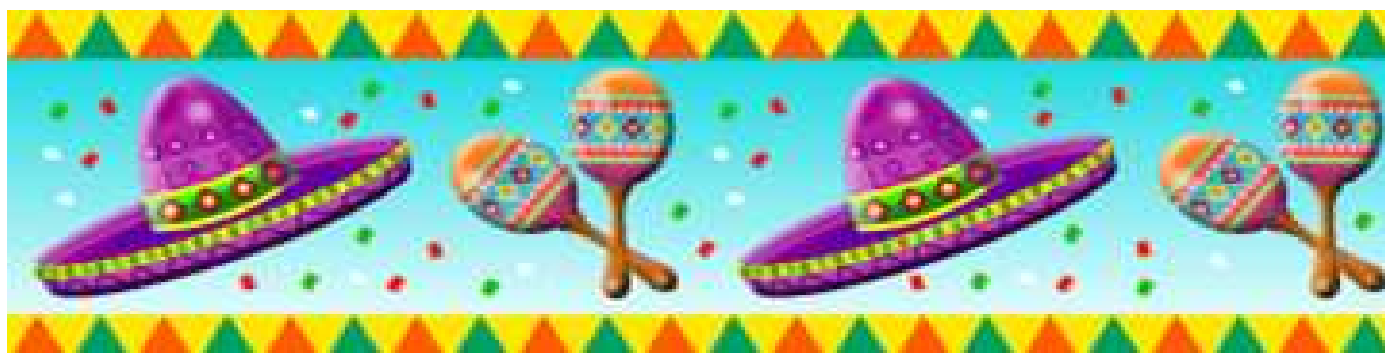


**"Cristo Rey Fiesta"**  
**Bluebonnet Area/LRGVD**  
**2011 Annual Assembly**

Fiesta means Celebration!  
Join our fellow Disciples of Christ  
for feasting, singing, fun and fellowship  
at the Annual Area Assembly

**April 29-30, 2011**  
Hosted by First Christian Church of McAllen

**For more information:**  
[www.bluebonnetarea.org](http://www.bluebonnetarea.org) or (210) 822-4345





A Center of Continuing Education for Disciples of Christ  
Rev. Julie A. Wood, Executive Director

March 14, 2011

Dear Colleagues in Ministry,

The Texas Bible Chair Foundation cordially invites you to attend our next **Clergy Leadership Institute**. It will be held on **Saturday, May 7, 2011 from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm** at **South Shore Christian Church, 4710 South Alameda Street, Corpus Christi, Texas**.

**Please note this is a different location than the January Clergy Leadership Institute AND A DIFFERENT DATE THAN ORIGINALLY ADVERTISED.**

You do not have to have participated in any of our previous sessions to attend the May Clergy Leadership Institute. Each Institute is designed to stand on its own.

The May session will focus on **Multi-Cultural Pastoral Care**. The workshops will be led by **Rev. Allen C. Allen**, Bluebonnet Area Interim Area Minister, and **Rev. Joe Jaime**, Chaplain, Valley Baptist Hospital, Harlingen. The sessions will be available in both English and Spanish, if needed.

During our Clergy Leadership Institutes over the past three years, we averaged approximately 25 clergy in attendance at each session. The Institutes are designed for both ordained and licensed clergy as well as men and women who are exploring a call to vocational ministry. Bluebonnet Area licensed ministers will receive Continuing Education units from the BBA Department of Ministry for attending the entire day. CEU certificates will be distributed following the Closing Worship service. The courses are taught by ordained ministers and other scholars with graduate-level degrees.

Attached is a registration form for you to use. Limited scholarships are available. We would encourage any church or individual who is able to send an extra registration fee in order to make more scholarship money available for this training.

**Also, please mark your calendars for the final Clergy Leadership Institute in 2011:**

**Saturday, September 10, 2011 at Rolling Oaks Christian Church in San Antonio**

Please call or email me with any questions or if you need additional information about the Clergy Leadership Institute. I look forward to seeing you there!

Blessings,

Julie A. Wood

**REGISTRATION**  
(Please Detach and Mail)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street/PO Box  
City \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE: Office \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Church Name/Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Ordained Minister  Licensed Minister   
Other \_\_\_\_\_  
Special Needs: Translator  Diet   
Other

**Registration Fee: \$35.00 for all workshops and lunch.**

A limited number of Scholarships are available.

Registrations must be received by  
May 4, 2011.

**PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY REGISTRATION**

Send to: Texas Bible Chair Foundation  
2007 University Avenue  
Austin TX 78705-5623

Amount Paid: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

The Texas Bible Chair Foundation is sponsoring the Clergy Leadership Institute as part of its commitment to offering educational opportunities for clergy and lay leaders of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). In 1904, Mrs. M. M. Blanks of Lockhart donated property and seed money to the United Christian Missionary Society for the purpose of establishing a Bible Chair on the campus of the University of Texas at Austin. In 1905, the Bible Chair was opened under Dr. Frank L. Jewett. After losing the focus of religious education at UT, the Directors and Board of the Bible Chair have worked hard to find God's vision and purpose for carrying out our charter - being "a center of continuing education for Disciples of Christ."



A Center of Continuing Education  
for Disciples of Christ

# Clergy Leadership Institute

**Saturday, May 7, 2011**

**South Shore Christian Church**  
4710 South Alameda Street  
Corpus Christi, TX

**9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.**

Open to all Ordained and Licensed Disciples  
and United Church of Christ Ministers

**DIRECTIONS TO SOUTH SHORE CHRISTIAN CHURCH**  
4710 South Alameda Street  
Corpus Christi, TX 78412  
(361) 992-6391

The church is at the corner of South Alameda Street and Airline Road in Corpus Christi.

From IH-37, take Exit 4A, Texas 358 East, toward Airport/NAS-CCAD. Follow Texas 358 to the Airport Road exit. Turn left onto Airline Road and follow to South Alameda Street. Turn left onto South Alameda Street. The church will be on the right.

For more information or questions about registration, please contact Rev. Julie Wood at the Texas Bible Chair Office at 512-477-6104 ext. 14 or by email at TexasBibleChair@yahoo.com.

**SCHEDULE**

<b>9:00 am - 9:30 am</b>	<b>Registration</b>
<b>9:30 am - 10:00 am</b>	<b>Welcome and Worship</b>
<b>10:15 am - 11:30 am</b>	<p><b>SEMINAR #1</b>  <b>MULTI-CULTURAL PASTORAL CARE</b>                  "Grief and Loss"                  Instructor:                  Rev. Allen C. Allen                  Bluebonnet Area Interim Area Minister</p>
<b>11:30 am - 12:15 pm</b>	<p><b>LUNCH</b> <i>(Provided with Registration)</i>                  Time will be allowed for small group discussions on issues and challenges of ministry.</p>
<b>12:15 pm - 1:30 pm</b>	<p><b>SEMINAR #2</b>  <b>MULTI-CULTURAL PASTORAL CARE</b>                  "Pastoral Ministry in Family Crisis"                  Instructor:                  Rev. Joe Jaime, Chaplain                  Valley Baptist Hospital, Harlingen</p>
<b>1:45 pm - 3:00 pm</b>	<p><b>SEMINAR #3</b>  <b>MULTI-CULTURAL PASTORAL CARE</b>                  "Pastoral Ministry in Family Crisis"                  Instructor:                  Rev. Joe Jaime, Chaplain                  Valley Baptist Hospital, Harlingen</p>
<b>3:00 pm - 3:30 pm</b>	<b>Closing Worship with Communion</b>

**(All Sessions will be presented in English and Spanish if needed.)**

**SAVE THE DATES**  
**2011**

**Upcoming**  
**Clergy Leadership Institute**  
**Session**

**Saturday, September 10, 2011**  
 Rolling Oaks Christian  
 Church  
 San Antonio

*Continuing Education credit is available for Licensed Ministers through the Bluebonnet Area Department of Ministry by attending the Texas Bible Chair Foundation's Clergy Leadership Institute.*

**REFUND POLICY:**

If requested, 80% of the registration fee will be refunded up to 14 days prior to the Clergy Leadership Institute. In the event of an emergency, 100% of the registration fee will be refunded up to the beginning of the event if the Texas Bible Chair Foundation is notified in writing.

**BLUEBONNET AREA / LRGVD  
DISCIPLE WOMEN'S RETREAT**

*September 23 - 25, 2011*

*Disciple Oaks Retreat Center - Gonzales, TX*

**"The Sweet Life"**

*Savoring Time with God*

*Ephesians 3:20 - 21*

**OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

**Sheila Spencer,**

**Program Director / Merger Staff**

**for the Office of Disciples Women in Indianapolis!**

**Lodge rooms fill up fast and are on a  
1st come, 1st served basis.** So mark your calendars now and plan to  
**register early to get the best room assignments.**

For event information, please contact  
Melanie Holtz - BBA / LRGVD Area Coordinator  
(512) 535-0625 or [melanie@holtz.biz](mailto:melanie@holtz.biz)

**Registration forms will be available at the Area Assembly on April 29.**



# BBA TODAY

(for more information on these events and others please visit our online calendar at [www.bluebonnetarea.org](http://www.bluebonnetarea.org))

## APRIL

- 9 Capital Mentor Group, Hyde Park CC at 10:00 a.m.
- 11 LRGVD Mentor Group, FCC Edinburg at 7:00 p.m.
- 12 Capital Cluster Meeting, Hyde Park CC at 12:00 p.m.
- 17 Easter Offering
- 17-21 CCSW Leadership Team Spiritual Retreat, Dallas
- 24 Easter
- 24 Easter Offering
- 26-28 RCOM, Ft Worth
- 27 Alamo Cluster Meeting, Rolling Oaks CC at 11:00 a.m.
- 29-30 BBA/LRGVD Area Assembly

## MAY

- 7 Clergy Leadership Institute, South Shore CC, 9:30-3:30
- 9 LRGVD Mentor Group, FCC Edinburg at 7:00 p.m.
- 9-10 Regional Clergywoman's Retreat, Glen Lake Camp & Retreat Center
- 10 Capital Cluster Meeting, Hyde Park CC at 12:00 p.m.
- 14 DORC Workday
- 14 Capital Mentor Group, Hyde Park CC at 10:00 a.m.
- 25 Alamo Cluster Meeting, Rolling Oaks CC at 11:00 a.m.

### We Want To Hear From You!

- Do you have a special event planned that you would like to share with other congregations across the BBA/LRGVD?
- Have you had a special celebration (pastor's birthday, ordination ceremony, graduation, church anniversary, community event, etc.)?
- Have you or your members served your community, state, or nation in a special way?
- Please let us know! Please send your stories and pictures to Anna in the Area office ([bba@ccsw.org](mailto:bba@ccsw.org)) **by the 15th of each month** to include in the next month's issue.

## The Chalice

A monthly publication of  
BBA/LRGVD Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

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San Antonio, Texas 78201                        Email: [bba@ccsw.org](mailto:bba@ccsw.org)  
[www.bluebonnetarea.org](http://www.bluebonnetarea.org)