

LITANY FOR A NEW DAY IN REGIONAL MINISTRY

L: Brothers and Sisters in Christ, this is a day of rejoicing. We step out together to consecrate a new venture. Trusting in God's Holy Spirit to transform us, we will consecrate the joint adventure of the Michigan Disciples and the Illinois/Wisconsin Disciples regions in a New Day in Regional Ministry. May it honor God in all ways.

P: We, the members of the churches of the Michigan Disciples and Illinois/Wisconsin Disciples regions envision new ways of engaging in Regional Ministry that will broaden our services, enlarge our contributions to the work of each church in their worship, justice work, service to local and global communities, and enhance our study of the Word.

L: There are new relationships to build and expanded uses of resources to explore and share.

P: We, the members of the churches of the Michigan Disciples and Illinois/Wisconsin Disciples regions, with glad and grateful hearts, present this New Day in Regional Ministry to be consecrated to the glory of God and for service in strengthening God's people for discipleship and ministry.

L: About 2 years ago, the Michigan Disciples determined that there were insufficient finances to support a full time Regional Minister in the upcoming years. A task force studying and praying over this dilemma heard the Spirit suggest a covenant partnership with another region for the sharing of regional responsibilities without becoming one large region.

P: This partnership of covenant would not be a merger of the 2 Regions that would comingle assets and finances, but rather a new way of doing regional ministry- still as 2 separate regions partnering with each other under the leadership of one Regional Minister.

L: Each of the two Regions will remain autonomous regions and will share a Regional Minister, share other resources, talents and programming to create a new way, in this New Day, of doing Regional Ministry.

P: The New Day of doing Regional Ministry provides many opportunities to form new relationships between the churches of each region and new relationships between the churches across both regions.

L: The new relationships will provide new pathways for the movement of the Holy Spirit, enriching all the forms of ministry and service called forth in each region.

P: Brothers and Sisters in Christ, let us celebrate this New Day in Regional Ministry and rejoice in its holy use.

L: We consecrate this New Day in Regional Ministry.

P: For the Work of the Regional Minister for the support of both Regions-

L: For new relationships and connections-

P: In faith, that all our congregations will be strengthened and inspired-

L: In gratitude for the labor of all who love and serve Your church, those who heard this call to a New Day in Regional Ministry and those who have structured this New Day in Regional Ministry to support and engage in regional ministry-

P: We rejoice in this New Day in Regional Ministry.

All: (with exuberance) **IT'S NOT A MERGER; IT'S A COVENANT PARTNERSHIP!**

**Covenant Prayer for The Christian Church in Illinois/Wisconsin
and The Christian Church in Michigan**

**Rev. Teresa "Terri" Hord Owens
General Minister and President
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the US and Canada**

Gracious and loving God,

In everything we give thanks, and in this moment, we give thanks for two parts of the body of Christ: these two regions, the Christian Church in Illinois/Wisconsin and the Christian Church in Michigan. Jesus calls us to love one another as he has loved us, for this is how the world will know we are his disciples.

We pray for this partnership that it might call each congregation, each minister, to consider your limitless love as a call to bring forth the kingdom of God on the earth. May each one see the endless possibilities you provide that are before us because of that love. May we see new ways to collectively work and advocate for change and a dismantling of those sins that keep us from living wholly into your call to love our neighbor.

Lord, let us stand up for one another, joined in discipleship, prepared to live and serve together, beyond geography, beyond our differences. May we be for one another strength, comfort, encouragement, challenge and peace as we live out our calling as followers of Jesus Christ. And may your Spirit fill and inspire us to live into the covenant of love that binds us to you and to one another.

In the name of Jesus the Christ, we pray, Amen.



January 2, 2022