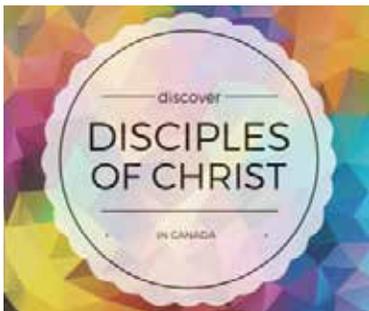


# The Canadian Disciple



A Publication of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Canada

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## January Prayer / February Partners

Jan 15 Mapleton Church of  
Christ, Mapleton, ON  
Pastor: Janet Anstead

Jan 22 Word of Life CC/Eglise  
Parole de Vie, Joliette, QC  
Pastor: Oscar Wakenge

Jan 29 Église Évangélique  
Mahanaïm De La Rive Nord  
Pastor: Jean Daniel Francois

Feb 5 Broadway Disciples UC,  
Winnipeg, MB  
Pastor: Bernie Wiebe

Feb 12 Campbell Stone United  
Church, Calgary, AB  
Pastor: Danah Cox

Feb 19 Milton Christian Church,  
Milton, NS  
Pastor: Russell Prime

### Special prayer requests:

- .Upcoming General Board meeting in Indianapolis (Feb 25-28)
- Our brothers & sisters in the US as they struggle with post-election upheaval
- All areas where violence & war take so many lives and leave so many grieving

## Resolutions

I remember as a child sitting with my sisters to make our annual resolution lists on New Year's Eve. There were things on there like getting a first job, accomplishing a specific long-overdue task, maybe even catching the eye of the cute guy in math class. As I got older and life changed, resolutions changed to eating less and exercising more, building up a savings account and reducing debt, getting a bigger house or finishing a degree.

I don't remember when I stopped making resolutions. But I do remember that I made a conscious decision to stop. Over the years I carried no small amount of guilt when I didn't accomplish some or (usually) all of the promises I had made to myself on New Year's Eve. So I decided that I had enough of failing myself, and committed instead to living with hope, intention, and as much grace (for myself and others) as I could muster.

Just because I stopped making resolutions at the dawning of a New Year didn't mean I didn't look towards the New Year as a fresh start, or restart, or that I didn't desire to live a better life. I think I just became more practical. Rather than trying to fix the problems that I thought I had, I began to live with intention to build on strengths, and focus on the positive. I began to live with more gratitude, recognizing that in fact, nothing was missing in life, that God was good, and I was a beloved child of God. I began to see that despite the "mistakes" I had made in the previous year, each day ahead of me was opportunity to see how God had used my life and actions in spite of the times I tripped up. Turning my thoughts towards God's abundance and allowing grace to heal me, I felt more than ever forgiven, loved, and free.

At the dawning of this New Year, my prayer for all of you, from coast to coast to coast, is that you might put aside attitudes of scarcity in your lives, homes, and congregations. I pray that you embrace instead an attitude of gratitude, believing with every fibre of your being that you are made in the image of God, beloved, forgiven, redeemed, set free with purpose. May all of our congregations commit to such an attitude, putting away the grief, sorrow, and shame of the past, the anxiety of the unknown future. And may you embrace instead the joy of knowing that God has been with you all the way along, the peace of knowing that God will never leave you, and the hope that there is still so much more Spirit has in store for Christ's church! May 2017 be the year Canadian Disciples declare the year of the Lord's favour and resolve to be instruments of Christ's peace, justice, and wholeness always! Amen - Jen

## How Well Do You Know Your Region?

What exactly does the Region do? It's a question I hear from folks inside our communion and outside of it. What does the Region REALLY do?

Well, those who have been around for some time and have served on the Regional Board probably know some of what we are up to – planning & getting the bi-annual Convention going; sending out materials to churches for special offerings and upcoming events; helping keep the Canadian church connected with the whole denomination; keeping

the Regional Minister busy! There are committees and reports and of course budgets and finances and minutes and motions. All of which are important to the overall operation of Your Region.

But there are so many other things that the Region has a hand in both in your local congregation and across the country. Did you know that your Region is a resource for you when you are looking for a new pastor? Is here to help you set up a search committee, get your profile ready, and then help get the word out and find prospects that will be a good fit your community and ministry? Did you know that your Region is here to support and help you through times of conflict, when your congregation doesn't see eye-to-eye and gets caught up in the messiness of community life together? Ensuring our congregations are healthy, and well equipped for ministry is our primary concern. In fact, if your congregation realizes that maybe it needs some support in envisioning a new way of being, or is thinking of starting a new ministry, or needs to overhaul its constitution, or structure, your Regional Minister is available to come and work with your Board and congregation to dream new dreams and

cast new visions, to learn new skills to enable the church to live into God's vision for this new age in which we live.

Maybe your congregation has been wanting to do a really important outreach or local mission with racialized or marginalized peoples in an effort to truly become a pro-reconciling church, but doesn't have the funding. The Region can be a resource for Reconciliation grants to help in your mission efforts.



And let's not forget about new church! To date your Region has helped to get five new congregations off the ground from coast to coast. In addition, we are celebrating the affiliation of a new Congolese congregation in Joliette, QC, and renewed ties with our two Haitian congregations in Montreal. Not only do we help with funding these new ministries across the country, but we work hard to encourage connections

between these new Disciple communities and the rest of our church family. Not all of these new congregations rise up independently, but many are visionary works by existing congregations who know the value in starting new works, but need a partner with experience and resources. All of these new ministries are celebrated not only in the Region, but in the greater church, where your Board reps and Regional minister, share this witness to God's goodness with our brothers and sisters across North America.

And there's more! Not only are we a Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the US and Canada, we are a national church, and are greatly involved in ecumenical work – founding and active members of the Canadian Council of Churches and World Council of Churches, in conversation with Stone Campbell tradition leaders, collaborating with

ecumenical partners here and abroad to be a witness to the power of Christian unity, and to work together for a more whole, just, and peaceful world.

And while there are many other tasks that we also work on, one of the most important is the care and support of our pastors, chaplains, students, and retired clergy. These amazing men and women give their lives over to serving the Risen Christ, loving our congregations, and tirelessly working so that people will come to know Christ and what it means to be beloved children of God. Your Region makes sure they are supported, cared for, listened to, and lifted up in prayer. With partners, we provide educational opportunities and times to meet together with peers.

So many of these activities that we undertake no single congregation could do on their own. So many of these tasks and responsibilities affect us all as the body of Christ. When one suffers, we all suffer. When one celebrates, we all celebrate. Your Region is here as your partner in ministry, to make sure you have what you need to walk confidently into the vision God has for your congregation.

As I am sure you can appreciate, all of these activities take considerable funding to accomplish.

We continue to plant new churches and work with existing congregations to transform with hearts for mission, both necessary activities as we move into a new era for the church. But there is considerable drain on our finances as congregational giving declines, but the demand for support increases.

At the beginning of this new year, I humbly ask that you would keep your Region in prayer as we discern a way through this challenging reality. I also ask your boards and leaders to prayerfully consider increasing your tithe to the Regional church. We encourage every congregation to “tithe”...a minimum of 5% to the work of your ministry partner (Region) and 5% to mission. Many of you give generously to the work of the Region and we are so incredibly thankful for all of your support. Your gifts enable us to minister to you and on your behalf across the country and around the world. We understand that budgets are tight and we are all feeling the pinch. Please put this request to prayer and know that those of us working on your behalf are thankful for your prayers, love, and support of our shared ministry. God is doing great things with this church! May the Spirit continue to ignite the flame of passion within us all to face this new day together with enthusiasm, prayer, faith, and hope.  
-- Respectfully, Jen Garbin

## Haiti – Ils Verront la Lumière/ They Shall See the Light

« Le peuple qui marchait dans les ténèbres Voit une grande lumière; » Esaïe 9.1a



Emmanuela & Fritz-Gerald Joseph, Montreal

L'ombre des ténèbres a débuté la nuit du 5 décembre 1492 quand les conquérants espagnols, dirigés par *Christophe Colomb* accostèrent les

rives de l'île « *Quisqueya – Bohio* » (Haïti – terre de montagnes). Les autochtones qui habitaient l'île furent décimés en 3 décennies par les Espagnols avides de richesse, pour être remplacés par les noirs d'Afrique. Ce fut le début d'une longue période de

cruauté, de massacre, d'esclavagisme pour les nouveaux habitants de l'île.

Trois cents ans après l'arrivée des Espagnols, l'île est sous le contrôle des Français. C'est alors que surgit un libérateur, à l'instar de Moïse pour le peuple hébreu; *François-Dominique Toussaint* de l'habitation Breda (Nord d'Haïti) baptisé « **Toussaint Louverture** » ou « **le Précurseur** » ou « **le Spartacus Noir** ». Car il fut le chef de la révolution haïtienne de 1791 à 1802. Capturé par les troupes françaises, son successeur *Jean-Jacques Dessalines* prit les rênes de l'armée des anciens esclaves appelée l'armée indigène. Si Moïse fit sortir le peuple hébreu de l'esclavage, et que Josué les conduisit à la liberté de la terre promise, alors Toussaint est celui qui sortit les Haïtiens de l'esclavage et Dessalines les conduisit à la liberté. Le 1<sup>er</sup> janvier 1804, pour la première fois dans

l'histoire de l'humanité, un peuple noir inscrivit son nom au conseil des nations libres et souveraines; à Gonaïves - Haïti l'acte de l'indépendance fut déclaré et signé.

Même après la Déclaration de l'Indépendance, la lumière ne brilla pas encore. Le 17 octobre 1806, Dessalines « le père de la patrie » fut assassiné par ceux qui devaient le protéger. Depuis, nous constatons un chamboulement politique et un déclin constant dans le leadership de ce pays. Jusqu'à nos jours Haïti souffre de la maladie du « manque d'hommes ». Le 1<sup>er</sup> janvier 2017, nous avons célébré les 213 ans de la déclaration de l'indépendance d'Haïti; cependant le pays vit encore dans les ténèbres du néo-colonialisme, du trouble gouvernemental et de la pauvreté économique tout en étant si riche en histoire, en culture et en spiritualité.



“The people who walk in darkness will see a great light.” Isaiah 9:2a

The shadow of the darkness began in the night of December 5<sup>th</sup>, 1492 when the Spanish conquerors, lead by Christopher Columbus, accosted by “Quisqueya – Bohio” (Haiti – Land of the Mountains) island’s shores. Natives living on the island were decimated in 3 decades by the Spanish striving for riches, only to be replaced by African Black People. It was the beginning of a long period of cruelty, massacre and slavery for this island’s new residents.

Three centuries after the Spanish’s arrival, the island is under the full control of the French nation. It is when a liberator started to rise, following the example of Moses for the Hebrew people: François-Dominique Toussaint from Breda’s (North of Haiti) plantation and baptized as “**Toussaint Louverture**” or “**Forerunner**” or “**Black Spartacus**”. Because he was the head of the Haitian revolution from 1791 to 1802. When captured by the French troops, his successor Jean-Jacques Dessalines took the army’s lead that was made up of old slaves then called *native army*. If Moses took the Hebrew people out of slavery and Joshua lead them to the freedom of the promised land, then Toussaint is the one that freed the Haitians from slavery and Dessalines led them to freedom. January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1804, for the first time

Si l’on veut aider Haïti, nous devons comprendre son histoire, afin d’agirefficacement aujourd’hui pour changer son lendemain. Les enfants d’Haïti vivent toujours avec l’espérance qu’un jour, Dieu leur aura fait grâce d’un messie qui fera luire la lumière sur ce peuple; alors ils verront la lumière souhaitée par leurs patriarches.

« Sur ceux qui habitaient le pays de l'ombre de la mort Une lumière resplendit. »  
Esaïe 9.1b

**Fritz-Gerald Joseph**  
**Église Chrétienne de la Pentecôte Missionnaire**  
**des Prières (Disciples du Christ)**  
**Montréal, 11 janvier 2017**

in human history, a black nation was listed in the Free and Sovereign Nations Council. At Gonaïves - Haiti, the Independence Act was declared and signed.

Even after the Independence declaration, the light still was not shining. On October 17, 1806, Dessalines, “Father of the nation” was killed by those who were supposed to protect him. Since then, we notice a political upheaval and a constant decline in the country’s leadership. Till this day, Haiti suffers from the “lack of men” illness. January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017, we celebrated the 213rd year of Haiti’s independence declaration; however the country still suffers from the darkness of neo-colonialism, of government trouble and of economical poverty while being so opulent in history, in culture and in spirituality.

If we want to help Haiti, we need to understand its story, in order to effectively help today and change its tomorrow. The children of Haiti still live today with the hope that one day, God will grant them a messiah that will shine the light on this nation: only then will they see the light their patriarchs longed for.

**Fritz-Gerald Joseph**  
**Translated by Emmanuela Joseph**  
**Montreal, January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

## Canada's Oldest Disciple Passes Away in 105<sup>th</sup> Year

Sarah M. Burns (nee Barden) of Guelph, passed away peacefully at her residence on Monday,



January 9, 2017, in her 105th year. Sarah was born a Disciple, growing up and becoming a member of the Hillsburgh Christian Church.

When she moved to Guelph, she transferred her membership to the Guelph Christian Church and has been a faithful member

ever since. Sarah had a deep love of Christ's church and for Disciples everywhere. She was known in the Guelph congregation as our "evangelist" and even in her advanced years, would take a weekly trip to the administrator's office to find out who the new

residents were in the retirement complex where she lived for the past 15 years. Upon receiving the information, Sarah would then make a visit to the new resident and invite them out to Sunday services which take place at the retirement home. On her 103<sup>rd</sup> birthday, we asked her to what she attributed her long life. She replied, "I go to church every Sunday!" Always smiling, engaging, faithful, and prayerful, Sarah was a bright light in this small community and will be sorely missed.

Beloved wife of the late Carl Matthews and the late Lorne Burns. Dear sister-in-law to Lila Barden of Hillsburgh. Fondly remembered by many nieces and nephews and their families. Friends will be received at the Wall-Custance Funeral Home & Chapel, 206 Norfolk St., Guelph for one hour prior to the funeral service in the funeral home chapel on Fri, Jan 13 at 1p. Reception to follow. Memorial contributions to the Salvation Army or the charity of your choice appreciated.



## General Announcements & Invitations

- To receive the Canadian Disciple in your email, please send your request to [rm@canadadisciples.org](mailto:rm@canadadisciples.org) or sign-up on our website [www.canadadisciples.org](http://www.canadadisciples.org)
- Need to get in touch with your Regional Minister? Email [rm@canadadisciples.org](mailto:rm@canadadisciples.org) or call 519-731-4629
- Please watch the mail for the 2017 Congregational Year Book Report forms. Your prompt attention to filling these out and returning them is important and appreciated!
- Don't forget to register for General Assembly! It's an important year with the election of a new General Minister and President. Great opportunity for learning, fellowship, getting to know our General Ministries, youth events, and so much more! [ga.disciples.org](http://ga.disciples.org)



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JOHN 17: 20-21a

**A RESOLVE**  
For Every Morning of the New Year

**I** will this day try to live  
a simple & sincere and  
serene life & repelling  
promptly every thought of  
discontent, anxiety, discouragement, impurity and self-seeking & cultivating cheerfulness & magnanimity, charity, and the habit of holy silence & exercising economy in expenditure, carefulness in conversation diligence in appointed service, fidelity to every trust and a child-like trust in God

 From a Calendar by Bishop John H. Vincent  
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