

# EMERGING PRACTICES IN SUSTAINABLE CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRIES

It took a pandemic to do it but more congregational leaders in the Church are doing three activities more often:

- Praying and seriously seeking God's counsel before making *important* decisions
- Crossing congregational boundaries for creative conversation, collaboration, and mutual support
- Sharing facilities, staff, and other resources

There is so much good news to share but I will start with one example that could benefit your congregation.

Our own part-time, contract Regional Finance Manager spends an average of eight hours a week helping us to keep our financial records current, transparent, and keeping up with recent changes in I.R.S. and state requirements. Ms. Gwen Brown came to us with an impressive resume and agreed to work part-time as self-employed, contract staff (often on weekends) while holding down a full-time position. She often says that she enjoys working with churches and we certainly appreciate her and her work here.

When we talked about the need that some congregations with fewer members might have for part-time bookkeeping services on a contract basis, Gwen said that she would be happy to offer similar services like that for another four or five churches.

Gwen provides us with an invoice for the agreed upon hours worked and we pay her as an independent contractor. She or someone like her could do that for four or five congregations and make a living wage while maintaining some flexibility self-employed. Ms. Brown is also able to teach new congregational financial officers the best practices for handling tithes, offerings and gifts. She has decades of experience keeping corporate and church financial records that are audit worthy.

Gwen's resume is available upon request. Any congregation that wants to have reliable part-time bookkeeping service at an affordable price may contact her directly at <mailto:finance@kcdisciples.org>.

Ms. Brown will be the featured presenter at a **Best Practices for Congregational Financial Accounting** workshop and lunch at the Belton Christian Church on Saturday, August 21<sup>st</sup> from 10 am – 12 pm. Participants will receive a complimentary copy of the Handbook for Church Treasurers courtesy of the Christian Church Foundation. This program is free to participants who register before July 31<sup>st</sup> and is made possible by your congregation's support of the Disciples Mission Fund. To register, [click here!](#)