

# Week of Compassion

## Board of Stewards Meets at TCU



*“...and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.”*

Last Thursday morning, Rev. Dr. Bill Lee led the Week of Compassion Board of Stewards in prayer and morning devotions, centered on this text from Matthew 10. The Board gathered in Fort

Worth for its fall meeting, hosted by Texas Christian University.

The members of the Board of Stewards help strengthen the ministry of Week of Compassion: sharing a vision for the future and providing stewardship of the finances. Gathering twice a year, the Board considers proposals from partners seeking support; reviews reports from previous and ongoing projects; and ensures that policies and procedures are in place to make the work of Week of Compassion as effective as possible. One of the priorities of the Board of Stewards is to keep this ministry accountable to the wider Church.

Shifting cultural and environmental dynamics continue to impact the work of Week of Compassion. From natural disasters happening with greater frequency and severity, to the escalating number of refugees in the world and the diminished capacity of the U.S. to receive those seeking sanctuary, our partners face significant challenges right now. Mindful of these dynamics, the Board is committed to strengthening our partner relationships for even more effective collaboration moving forward.

“The members of the Board of Stewards were led through a covenant response by our General Minister and President, Terri Hord-Owens, furthering the deep and faithful commitment of this body to work on behalf of the wider church within this defining ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ),” says Cindy Kim-Hengst, Chair of the Executive Committee. “Hearing how much need there is in the world can be disheartening--from typhoons and droughts, to basic needs of food and shelter, and increased numbers of displaced people in the world -- there are so many in need! However, after being with the Week of Compassion staff and Board, I know that there is a great deal of work being done to meet these needs around the world.”

In response to that tremendous need, the Board of Stewards approved two emergency appeals to respond to two recent global disasters: Typhoon Hagibis in Japan and drought in the Telangana state in India. Both of these programs will address immediate needs, as well as long-term quality of life.

In addition to responding to urgent needs following disaster, Week of Compassion leadership is also committed to meeting needs through ongoing sustainable development work around the world. To that end, the Board affirmed support of multiple projects. One grant will support women's empowerment in Sierra Leone; another will provide livelihood support in South Africa; while another addresses conflict resolution and peace work in the Middle East. The board also approved funding for projects that will aim to end hunger in Timor Leste, develop renewable energy sources in Eastern Europe, and educate Roma children living in poverty in Serbia.

"At our fall meeting, the Week of Compassion Board of Stewards worked long and hard to connect the generous gifts of our church with the deep needs of the world," says Rev. Jake Caldwell.

"Measured by the sum of the world's despair, the good we are able to do can seem small. But for those who are touched by Week of Compassion, we are making a world of difference. With the support of the wider Church, and with our partners throughout the world, the Board of Stewards was able to provide assistance to people who lost everything and are struggling to rebuild their lives in the wake of Typhoon Hagibis in Japan. Because of this support, 1,500 women in Tanzania will receive screening and treatment for cervical cancer. 200 women in Sierra Leone will gain access to credit and training in business, empowering them to provide for their families. These are just a few of the many ways the gifts of our church are at work to alleviate suffering throughout the world. As a member of the Board of Stewards, I am grateful for your partnership in ministry and humbled by the trust you have placed in us to carry out the mission of Week of Compassion."

Following the meeting, Executive Director, Vy Nguyen said, "I am grateful for the continued hard work of the Board of Stewards as they look ahead to strengthen this ministry and the relationship with our partners. This ministry continues to be strong and continues to have tremendous impact all over the world, especially right now."

As Dr. Lee reminded the board, we are called to serve those who are thirsty, offering "a cool cup of water." Through Week of Compassion, the whole church is present with those in need, "around the world and around the year." Whether it's water filters for a community recovering from a disaster; a hand-washing station for a school in Central America; or a clean, safe water source for an entire village, the programs that you support through this ministry give life. Thank you for sharing the love of Christ with those in need, and thanks to our Board for the vision, guidance, and leadership to carry this vital ministry into the future!

*Photo: Board Members and Friends*

### ***Mission***

*As the relief, refugee, and development mission fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Week of Compassion works with partners to alleviate suffering throughout the world.*

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