

Regional Search Committee Report

The CCSW Search Committee has spent much time and discernment to develop the attached Regional Minister job description and candidate profile. Information has been received from the Regional Council, congregations, town hall meetings, and emails submitted from individuals throughout the Region. Reports that have been assigned and received by the Regional Council from years of work by various committees have also served as a resource during this process. We believe that it is our duty to report to the Regional Council our findings, and to present profiles for Regional Ministry positions that will allow Regional Ministry to be successful. After reviewing all the information we have collected, this committee has determined that Regional Ministry cannot successfully be completed by any one individual. The necessary and desired pastoral and administrative duties that a Region this size requires are too much for one person to successfully and effectively accomplish.

We are presenting profiles for two separate positions: Regional Minister and Regional Executive. We understand the funding and structure concerns this report will generate. We acknowledge the validity of these concerns; we believe that it is our responsibility to report our findings and allow the Council to determine funding possibilities and the path forward from this point. The Search Committee has discerned that a repeat of our current model will not support, sustain, or strengthen the future of the Region. It is the intention of the Search Committee to ask for approval of these profiles at the next Council meeting and allow the Council to work out the details before we move forward.

An issue of concern moving forward for the Council is how to properly make anticipated changes to structure and funding issues, given the limits in place under the current design model. The current design sets requirements that appear to be unobtainable in a Regional Assembly process due to the lack of participation from many congregations. It is the request of the Search Committee to ask the next Regional Assembly to vote by consensus to allow the Regional Council to take whatever actions they deem necessary to allow Regional ministry to reorganize structurally and financially. Please note that the request is to allow the Regional Council, and not the Executive Committee, to take such action. It will be the responsibility of the Regional Council to continually report their decisions to members of the Region as well as give a full report at the next Regional Assembly.

One area of concern is the funding for future Regional ministry staff. I would like to recommend that every congregation be strongly encouraged to participate in the annual Christmas offering. A successful offering could make a big impact on the future design of the Region as all funds go directly to Regional ministry. It is reasonable to assume that without more financial support, our ability to fulfill our responsibilities to Areas and congregations will be very limited.

There are many exciting ministries currently happening throughout the CCSW. Meaningful services are being provided in many places. Please know that Area Ministers and Regional staff are dedicated to helping local congregations expand and improve their witness. Your prayers and support are continually needed to carry on this work.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Billings – Chair, Search Committee

Southwest Regional Profile

As reported in the 2015 Disciples of Christ Year Book, the Southwest Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is 32,625 participating members across over 400 congregations in New Mexico, Texas, the panhandle of Oklahoma, and Liberal, Kansas. Average worship attendance for the region is 18,815, with total outreach giving totaling over five and a half million dollars. Our region is ethnically, theologically and culturally diverse with Anglo, African-American, South Asian, East Asian, Hispanic, and Pacific Islander congregations in covenant together and a large spectrum of views and beliefs.

We are home to a Disciples college, university and divinity school (Jarvis Christian College, Texas Christian University and Brite Divinity School); our region supports the Inman Christian Center in San Antonio, Juliette Fowler Communities in Dallas, and Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Our Disciples Men, Women and Youth ministries are strong with active participation throughout the region. **We are a region seeking to find better ways to support local congregations and constituencies in service to Christ and the community.**

The Southwest Region is already in the process of restructure, as our area ministries are realigning boundaries and priorities in a quickly changing world. We are seeking to be led into the new model and mission to which God is calling us, and we seek a leader who will guide us through this change to a revitalized ministry in this place. **We seek a fresh vision that meets the current realities of our regional life.**

The geographical and financial challenges of the current structure are leading us to create two positions to lead the Southwest Region during this time of revitalization and evolution. **We are seeking a person with ordained standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to serve as our Regional Minister; the Regional Executive may be lay or clergy.**

The initial task in calling of both a Regional Minister and a Regional Executive is to facilitate the restructure and development of ministries, relationships and mission of the CCSW. **This is to be accomplished by October 2018.**

POSITION DESCRIPTION - Candidate Profile

We seek a Regional Minister who...

- embodies and articulates a strong identity as a Disciple of Christ.
- understands and encourages the missions of local congregations.
- proclaims the good news of Jesus Christ in word and action.
- supports and equips clergy.
- understands and is experienced with transformation in the church.
- respects and celebrates diversity in race, culture, theology and language.
- is accountable and responsible for all Regional staff.
- maintains and builds relationship with the denomination on behalf of the Southwest Region.
- delegates and oversees representatives of the Region on boards and in other obligations, done in consultation with the Regional Council.

We seek a Regional Executive who...

- assesses the viability of regional ministries, programs and design through evaluation of geographical, institutional, and financial realities.
- manages the assets, fiscal development, and stewardship of the Southwest Region.
- embodies and articulates a strong identity as a Disciple of Christ.
- reports to the Regional Minister.
- collaborates with the Regional Minister and Regional Council in the work of restructure.
- is trained, experienced and gifted in the arts of administration and communication.