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classes on elders and eldership development. The focus was promoting best practices and encouraging discussion on topics such as appointing and removing elders, the elders' role in oversight and shepherding, and working with a team of leaders.

***New elders:*** Raising up more shepherds to oversee and care for the flock remains a strong priority of the service team. Dallas appointed two new elders, for a total of six elders in the DFW Church. Boston, Lagos (Nigeria), Los Angeles, New York City, San Diego, South Florida and St. Louis each also added another elder to their elderships. Churches in Kiev, Charleston, South Carolina, and Springfield, Massachusetts appointed their first elderships. The continued emphasis is on training and appointing non-full-time elders.

***Promoting and preserving unity:*** Focusing on promoting and preserving unity is an important function of the Elders Service Team. The subcommittee on conflict resolution continues to be very competently led by Walter Evans, with the Elders Service Team, as a resource for those situations that remain unresolved. This resource continues to be used in our worldwide fellowship.

Encouraged by the initiative of brothers in our fellowship of churches like Scott Kirkpatrick, the service team began directly addressing the need for greater understanding of how to promote unity in racially and ethnically diverse congregations. The first emphasis is on the issues impacting African-American disciples, both in American society and in our family of churches. Darren Gauthier is leading this effort for the service team and is joined by Walter Evans and Sam Laing in collaboration with other leaders across the North American brotherhood.

Finally in terms of preserving and promoting unity worldwide, the elders helped to facilitate the establishment of the ICOC Events nonprofit entity. This was established to help manage the risks of hosting ICOC-sponsored events and development of the protocol for handling the monetary surpluses generated from events such as Reach2016.

***Subcommittees:*** The service team continued to adapt and grow. Walter Evans stepped up to serve as chairman for the service team in the middle of the year. By the fall, the committee had added to its number Jerry and Erlyn Sugarman of Los Angeles to represent that church and region, bringing the number of couples on the service team now to thirteen.

The Elders Service Team is focused on these areas represented by our subcommittees:

- Eldership development—Al Baird and Wyndham Shaw
- Marriage and Family—Frank Kim and Sam Laing
- Conflict resolution—Larry Craig and Walter Evans
- Unity—Darren Gauthier and Jerry Sugarman
- Prayer and comfort—Ron Brumley, Israel Ereola, and Bill Hooper
- Minutes and communication—John Brush and Dan Liu

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- ***Connecting a Country through Technology***
  *Leslie De Morais, Goiania, Brazil — Friday, 17 March 2017*
  Three years ago, as empty nesters, my husband Alcides and I decided to leave our comfortable first-world lives and return to the mission field in Goiania, Brazil. Obviously, anywhere you find people you have a...
- ***Last Chance for Low Prices on DT Hawaii and Alaska Cruises***
  *DT Travel — Monday, 20 March 2017*
  Last chance for the best pricing on the Disciples Today Hawaii (round trip Honolulu/October 28-November 4, 2017) and Alaska (round trip Seattle/August 18-25, 2017) Fellowship cruises. After this week prices...
- ***"UnBoxed" Conference in Orlando, April 20-22***
  *Richard Runge, Orlando, FL, USA — Sunday, 19 March 2017*
  We are convinced that there are many new and fresh ideas that would increase Christian outreach and ministry effectiveness, but may never be fleshed out because they are "not the way we have always done...
- ***Be Bold for Spiritual Change: God Answers Prayers***
  *Jeanie Shaw, Boston, MA, USA— Wednesday, 15 March 2017*
  Praise God for his love and power on behalf of his daughters. On Tuesday, March 7, the sisters in our family of churches around the world joined together in a day of praying and fasting for unity, boldness, compassion, courage, clarity of our mission, and...

## • UPCOMING EVENTS

***2017 ICOC Spring Leadership Meetings***
Dallas, Texas USA
April 4-8, 2017

***DT Singles Cruise***
Galveston, Texas USA
April 23-30, 2017

***ICMC US West***
Austin, Texas USA
June 29-July 1, 2017

***Middle East Conference***
Cairo, Egypt
July 2017

***ICMC US East***
Asheville, North Carolina USA
August 4-6, 2017

***2017 Family Ministry Conference***
Denver, Colorado USA
September 1-3, 2017

***2020 World Discipleship Summit***
Orlando, Florida USA
July 2-5, 2020

CONNECTING DISCIPLES IN CHURCHES AROUND THE WORLD

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INTERNATIONAL & LOCAL NEWS BULLETIN
To Inspire, Inform, Unify and Grow the International Churches of Christ
DT DISCIPLES TODAY
WWW.DISCIPLESTODAY.ORG • ISSUE 599 • MARCH 26, 2017

# Elders Service Team Report March 2017

*Written by Elders Service Team*



In 2016, God continued to refine and renew us as he faithfully leads each one of us on the Elders Service Team. Two of our couples in particular faced health challenges. Gloria Baird underwent another round of chemotherapy and Al Baird underwent back surgery near the end of the year. Wyndham Shaw continued to face undiagnosed difficulties with his health. We ask for prayers and God's grace for our group as we seek to serve him and channel his power and grace in all our endeavors and interactions. In spite of such challenges faced, both the Shaws and the Bairds attended the St. Louis discipleship conference, Reach2016, where they shared and taught powerfully.

God also renewed our numbers with another Shaw grandchild and the Laings' tenth grandchild, bringing the total number of grandchildren for the group to 74. Moreover, the Bairds and Hoopers each had a grandchild baptized, and the Brumleys had two grandchildren baptized, bringing the overall number of grandchildren who are disciples to 20! Through everything we rejoice in God's faithful loving kindness.

***Reach2016:*** Seventeen thousand disciples participated in the Reach North American Discipleship Conference in St. Louis in July. Several of the service committee members made significant contributions to the content of the conference agenda. The marriage and parenting lessons presented marked the culmination of months of planning, preparation and prayer. Many thanks to Sam and Geri Laing for chairing the sub-committee on family and for the significant contributions of others on the service team who preached and shared on family, marriage and parenting. Frank Kim delivered the message on winning our next generation for God. Wyndham Shaw and Al Baird taught a series of

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