

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Foundation Board Meeting: A Time for History and Recognizing Partnerships

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (November 17, 2025). Within the historical context offered by Tulsa, Oklahoma, the Christian Church Foundation, Inc. board of directors celebrated its partnership with Phillips Theological Seminary (PTS), conducted business, and recognized the transitions of new and retiring board members during its meeting November 7 – 9.



The Greenwood neighborhood in Tulsa, famously called Black Wall Street, was home to one of the most prosperous concentrations of African American businesses in the United States in the early 1900s. It was all burned to the ground during the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre. During the board meeting, members learned or were reminded that the destruction of Greenwood’s Black businesses led to economic devastation and cut off African American generational wealth that would have grown from the affluent community. While the history of Greenwood has gained visibility recently, racially biased policies and practices have and continue to create obstacles that hinder wealth creation and economic mobility. Foundation president Rev. Matt Rosine said, “To be in Tulsa for a meeting of the church’s foundation and not learn about the richest Black community in the U.S. and the estimated \$200 million of Black-owned capital that was lost, would be a mistake.” The Foundation continues its work to become a pro-reconciling/anti-racist ministry, reflecting the priorities of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).



Along with the Foundation board, members from local congregations Harvard Avenue Christian Church, Forest Park Christian Church, and Disciples Christian Church (Bartlesville, OK) gathered at PTS to celebrate the long-time partnership between PTS and the Foundation, including helping donors incorporate PTS

in their estate plans, establishing scholarships, and supporting seminary initiatives. In 2021, PTS entrusted more than 220 named endowment funds to the Foundation for investment. Rosine acknowledged the seminary's decision to invest with the Foundation through the shared belief that, "capital should serve creation and not the other way around." Newly inaugurated PTS president, Rev. Dr. F. Douglas Powe highlighted the affordable M.Div. and D. Min. programs available for Disciples, construction of the new Bedford House, and the seminary's commitment to elevating the discourse of religion in public life. The Foundation board members experienced excitement from the faculty and appreciated the depth of Disciples connections present at the seminary.

Board committees reviewed investment performance for both partner investor and donor funds and were pleased to report that funds continue to demonstrate positive and stable performance amid ongoing economic uncertainties, including the government shutdown.

The board welcomed four new board members Rev. Dr. Diana Hodges-Batzka, Executive Pastor at Florence Christian Church (Florence, KY); Rev. Dale Braxton, Senior Pastor of Snow Hill Christian Church (Fort Deposit, AL); Joni Hires, Executive Director, FMH Foundation (Midland, TX); and Betty Ridout, Commercial Relationship Manager, Bankers Trust (Des Moines, IA). The board also recognized three board members who are concluding their terms on the board: Marvin Anderson (St. Louis, MO); Marty Askins (Duncan, OK); and Rev. Heather Simpson (Uniontown, PA). The board thanked Rev. David Yonker (Burlington, IA), who concluded his term as chairperson, but will continue serving on the board. The board recognized Cathie White, assistant vice president investment services, who is retiring after nearly 14 years of dedicated service.



Outgoing board members Heather Simpson and Marty Askins. Marvin Anderson was unable to attend in person.

The board concluded its time together by worshipping at Harvard Avenue Christian Church.

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