



**National
Benevolent
Association**
of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

**NBA Incubate Initiative Helps Fund
Garden Beds for Gift of Years Project
May 2015**

Thanks to grant funding from the National Benevolent Association and the West Virginia Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the Gift of Years Project recently began a community garden in South Charleston, WV.



There, United Disciples of Christ Church created three standing and two raised garden beds that are more functional and accessible for “those persons of the golden years,” explained Rev. Rosetta Smith, Minister of Discipleship and Youth Programs.

“We had a late start for planting crops, so a couple of our gifted members planted vegetables while others helped water and harvest,” said Smith. “We were able to share the vegetables with those who wanted them in the congregation, as well as the Food Pantry in Charleston, WV.”

The congregation is assigning beds to persons interested in gardening for themselves and also hopes to build additional bed space and start planting vegetables for the sole purpose of donating to the Food Pantry. To continue improving safety for the gardeners, volunteers are spreading mulch between the beds, which makes it easier to walk around without sinking into mud on wet days.

The area also serves as a peaceful respite for its visitors, with a tree already planted and future plans for a bench and seating area near the garden.



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Gift of Years is an NBA Incubate Project in partnership with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in West Virginia, focusing on ministering with, to, and for older adults in local Disciples churches and the community. To this end, the Disciples in West Virginia are working to:

- Develop theological curriculum for understanding the gifts and challenges of aging.
- Develop practical materials that can be used within and by the people of our congregations to attend to the concerns and opportunities of growing older.
- Collecting empowering and inspiring stories from our seniors to be shared.
- Provide a variety of forums for reporting on our ministries and mutually sharing what we are doing and learning.
- Provide congregational grants (\$500/congregation) to assist in local, context specific ministry for, by and with “the gifted.”

To learn more, contact Rev. Ayanna Johnson Watkins, Director of the NBA Incubate Initiative, at **awatkins@nbacares.org**.

www.nbacares.org