

REGIONAL PROFILE

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) IN THE NORTHERN LIGHTS REGION

The Northern Lights Region was formed in 2020 by the proudly diverse congregations in Alaska, Washington, Northern Idaho, and Montana. Our 50 churches include two Korean congregations, two Samoan congregations and several blended congregations of Disciples and other faith traditions. Even as a pandemic swept the globe, God continued to create a new thing, challenging us to innovate and learn new ways to connect and build community.

We value ministries of justice and compassion. At the first in-person Regional Assembly of our newly formed region, we unanimously affirmed our partnership with Colombian organizations JUSTAPAZ and the peace and justice commission of CEDECOL (Evangelical or Protestant Council of Churches in Colombia) as part of our commitment to Global Ministries. During the breakout sessions, we also explored beginning the Open & Affirming process at the regional level.

Northern Lights Disciples, like most mainline denominational churches, are experiencing dramatic changes that include aging, decreased participation and offerings, and increased operational expenses. (Brian McLaren refers to this phenomenon in Christianity as “shrinking” – shrinking + wrinkling.)

While faced with these challenges, we likewise see a pivotal moment for transformation as people seek renewed purpose and community following the pandemic. The strong networks within our region can be used to move us forward together in ministry and help us define and live into our identity as The Northern Lights Region.

Despite spanning four states, three time zones, and 800,000 square miles, and having endured two-plus years of pandemic isolation, we long to be together to worship, do mission, and have fun!

WE SEEK A REGIONAL MINISTER WHO -----

Has a dynamic understanding of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and can connect congregations with appropriate resources.

Will travel throughout the region to connect and develop relationships with clergy, congregations, camps, and ecumenical partners.

Will seek to understand the indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest and Northern Plains.

Will learn and adapt to the unique church culture of the Northern Lights Region.

Will facilitate relationships and unity among conservative and progressive points of view among and within churches.

Will intentionally develop relationships with all ages, including Pre-K to college-aged youth and “shrinklings.”

Will have a vision for God’s church, understanding that many ways of doing and being church no longer serve us.

Will listen deeply and provide calming and empathic support to the ministers and congregations across the region.

Will be tech savvy and communicate through multiple platforms.

Will model self-care and boundary-setting – and support clergy in doing likewise.

Has training, experience, and gifts in congregational ministry and pastoral care, including administration, conflict resolution, and walking with churches in transition/transformation.