

# Northern Lights Reflections

Official Newsletter of the Christian Church  
(Disciples of Christ) in the Northern Lights Region

Vol 6 Issue 4 April 2025

## IN THIS EDITION

+Reflections with the  
Regional Minister  
p. 1

+Finding your peers in the  
Northern Lights Region  
p. 2

+Summer Camp 2025  
registration is open!  
p. 3

+Cane Ridge West  
events and opportunities  
p. 4

+Regional Grants available—  
Apply now  
p. 5

+Earth Month commitment  
+Billings Book Sale  
p. 6

+General Church Ministry news  
p. 7

Northern Lights Region  
4227 S Meridian, C615  
Puyallup, WA 98373

Phone: (253) 893-7202

[northernlightsdisciples.org](http://northernlightsdisciples.org)

## Overcoming Fear of the Future

*Reflections with Regional Minister Paul Allen*

Anticipatory fear, or fear of the future, seems to be a major topic of conversation on every news feed, internet video, post, or article I have read in the past few months. Fear of escalating tensions in our nation and the world, fear of change, of economic collapse, fear for those who are vulnerable, fear of everything, because our world is changing at a pace it has never before. I have been told that making choices based on fear leads to bad decisions, but what happens when you have no other choice, when, for one reason or another, you are forced to do something that frightens you?

When my family attends our General Assembly gathering, we let our kids choose one thing that they want to do, within reason. One year, our daughter Abby told us she wanted to go zip-lining. If you have never heard of this activity, you climb a tower, are strapped to a steel cable with a pulley, and are sent hurtling out into space, sliding down the cable until you reach the end of the zip line. One of the rides we went on was over one hundred feet in the air, one-fourth of a mile long, and the guide said I was going well over forty miles an hour when he hit the brake.



*Continued on Page 2*

I loved it, Abby had a blast, Joe enjoyed it, but Patti was terrified. She had to psych herself up every time she climbed a tower. When I asked her why she was doing this, she said, “It is for the kids!” and that was true, but I also believe that Patti went zip-lining to overcome her fear of heights and falling. She had to trust her guide to prepare her pulley, use the brake to slow her down, and keep her safe. I know how terrified she was, but she went down every zip line. She was amazing.

Many things in life terrify us, and some we should be frightened of, but other fears are only in our minds. Often, we become so obsessed with what might happen that we convince ourselves to never take a risk, to stay with what is comfortable or safe, and let the world pass by. Our Denomination has undergone a great deal of change in the last few years, and there are great changes to come as well. The General Assembly in Memphis, TN this year will be discussing changes to our General Board and for General Assemblies to come. The General Board is becoming smaller, will meet more often, and will have a different focus on representation. The General Assembly will not be meeting in person as often—once every three years—but will meet in the off years in a digital forum. Each congregation will have three delegates and will be encouraged to join in these gatherings.

For some, any change can be terrifying, yet the church always strives for transformation because we work together and seek out God’s will, not our own. I am amazed and humbled by the discernment and decisions of our leadership teams, and I look forward to the new challenges we will overcome as we seek to be “a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world.” Together we will step out into the unknown, let our great Guide prepare us, and then wait for the exhilaration of the journey ahead. Thanks be to God, Amen.



## Plug in around the NLR!

### **NEW! PHOEBE FELLOWSHIP:**

Created to provide a safe, supportive, and empowering environment for actively serving Northern Lights clergy who identify as women to connect, share experiences, and address challenges unique to their roles and lives as spiritual leaders. **The first meeting will be Thursday, May 8th at 1 pm PDT on Zoom.** To be part of this new group, email the Regional Office to be added and receive the Zoom link: [office@northernlightsdisciples.org](mailto:office@northernlightsdisciples.org)

### **RETIRED CLERGY GROUP:**

Since Sept. 2024, a growing number of retired clergy in the NLR, along with Regional Minister Paul Allen, have gathered the first Monday each month on Zoom at 1 pm PDT. The group has chosen to have presentations and guided conversations about a variety of topics of their choosing. Retired-active and Retired-inactive NLR clergy are encouraged to stay linked to the Region and one another through this fresh connection. Email the Regional Office to get updates and receive the Zoom link: [office@northernlightsdisciples.org](mailto:office@northernlightsdisciples.org)



### **CHAPLAINS IN THE NLR:**

Chaplains of all kinds are invited to a monthly Zoom gathering to share the joys and challenges of attending, in such intimate and important ways, crucial times in the lives of others. Regional Minister Paul Allen is also part of this group. The group meets first Tuesdays monthly at 7:15 pm PDT. To join, email the Regional Office to receive a Zoom link: [office@northernlightsdisciples.org](mailto:office@northernlightsdisciples.org)

### **CONGREGATIONAL PASTORS GATHERING:**

The Region is home to 45 congregations of different shapes and sizes. Most have a pastor shepherding their gifts and journey on the Way. All actively serving church pastors, commissioned or ordained, are encouraged to share conversation and learn along with peers experiencing many similar successes and trials. This Zoom group meets with Paul Allen Tuesdays at 11:30 am PDT; email the Regional Office to join: [office@northernlightsdisciples.org](mailto:office@northernlightsdisciples.org).

Camp Season is right around the corner—register now

# Gospel's Greatest Hits



SUMMER 2025

“This is my commandment: love one other as I have loved you.”

--John 15:12

*Join us at camp to learn about who Jesus was  
and how following his example makes the world a more loving place.*

**2025 summer camp registration is now open!**

Don't miss out on **new developments** in *registration payment plans, scholarship requests, and more!*  
Visit the Northern Lights Region website at [northernlightsdisciples.org/summer-camps](https://northernlightsdisciples.org/summer-camps) for info!

*Camps will be held at both of our Disciples-connected venues:*

### **Cane Ridge West Conference & Retreat Center – Lincoln, MT**

July 7-10 – Kids Camp (entering Grades 2-3): Register by June 23 (\$200)

July 7-10 – Junior Camp (entering Grades 4-5): Register by June 23 (\$200)

July 21-26 – Chi Rho/CYF (entering Grades 6-HS Grad '25): Register by: July 7 (\$275)

### **Gwinwood Retreat Center – Lacey, WA**

July 7-10 – Kids Camp (entering Grades 2-3): Register by June 23 (\$200)

July 7-12 – Junior Camp (entering Grades 4-5): Register by June 23 (\$275)

July 7-12 – Chi Rho/CYF (entering Grades 6-HS Grad '25): Register by June 23 (\$275)

Registration Deadline is 14 days prior to camp start

[Read the new scholarship policy](#) + [Learn about a new payment plan](#)

**REGISTER ONLINE WITH AN OPTIONAL PAYMENT PLAN**

<https://docgeneralassembly.regfox.com/nlr2025-summer-camps>

Contact the Regional Office with questions: [office@northernlightsdisciples.org](mailto:office@northernlightsdisciples.org)

## Couples Retreat at CRW

### **Reignite Your Love**

Are you and your partner ready to reconnect, heal past hurts, and create a stronger emotional bond?

Join us May 2-4, 2025 for a one-of-a-kind EMDR Couples Retreat at Cane Ridge West in beautiful Lincoln, MT.

This 3-day retreat, co-sponsored by Seeker's Harbor Faith Community, a Northern Lights Region congregation in Billings, MT, includes lodging, meals, and expert-guided sessions to help you deepen your connection and heal together.



### **Cane Ridge West Retreat Center**

\$797 per couple (includes everything!)

Registration closes April 26th

Call Tara at (406) 201-9353 or email

[tara@wisewaycounseling.com](mailto:tara@wisewaycounseling.com) to save your spot today!

## Work Weekend at CRW

# MAY 16-18, 2025 WORK WEEKEND!

# CRW

Conference & Retreat Center

**Cane Ridge West friends, family, Region, and plain curious—you are invited for Work Weekend 2025 from May 16-18!**

It's an opportunity for everyone, regardless of age or skill level—no prior experience is necessary! There will be a variety of projects including cleaning the lodge, Fellowship Hall, and cabins, routine maintenance, sage and weed control, brush cleanup, tree trimming, wood cutting, and more! The best part? There's no set schedule—*come when you can and leave when you need to!* Any time shared is truly appreciated. The weekend will kick off on Friday morning.

Bring work gloves, chainsaws, rakes, trucks/trailers, and food to share for a potluck! Feel free to bring friends and family. Cleaning materials for indoor projects provided.

Helpers—consider staying over for free in the lodge, cabins, or tent camping area—just bring toiletries, bedding, and towels. Call CRW at (406) 564-1887 to let them know you're staying so they can ensure there's a spot waiting for you.

### **Operation Firepit!**

Remember magical moments spent around the campfire, sharing songs and stories that warmed our hearts? Time has dimmed that firepit's glow, but there's a silver lining!

CRW has announced plans for its refurbishment, and needs help. Your donations will be a meaningful investment in the growth and memories of future campers who will gather there. If you have memories to preserve or want new campers to be able to create their own, send a gift to CRW: 1019 Central Ave, Great Falls, MT 59401, or give conveniently through [Givelify](https://www.givelify.com/tinyurl.com/yc7a9kd3) ([tinyurl.com/yc7a9kd3](https://www.givelify.com/tinyurl.com/yc7a9kd3)). No gift is too small; every bit helps bring back the warmth of campfires for generations to come!

# Northern Lights Reflections

**It's grant season! Apply now while they're available**

The Northern Lights Region is now offering a number of ways that churches, clergy, and laity can benefit from congregational legacy funds, intentional funds from benefactors now passed, and generous regional donors!

Now available, a variety of grants to support our regional members:

### **First-Time Congregational Pastor General Assembly Grant:**

As named, this grant offers up to \$1,500 of reimbursement with receipts for expenses incurred for an active church pastor's first time attending the General Assembly. This year's General Assembly in Memphis, TN will be an important one as big conversations and decisions about the structure of the General Church will take place.

[Read the policy HERE](#) to check eligibility for this grant, and make a request by filling out the simple form at [northernlightsdisciples.org/1st-time-ga-grant](https://northernlightsdisciples.org/1st-time-ga-grant).

**Clergy & Laity 2025 General Assembly Grant:** This grant offers up to \$1,500 of reimbursement with receipts for expenses incurred for clergypersons' and laypersons' 2025 General Assembly registration, airfare, hotel, and meals (that aren't already covered by a church or another source). This limited-availability grant may be requested using the application at [northernlightsdisciples.org/2025-clergy-laity-ga-grant](https://northernlightsdisciples.org/2025-clergy-laity-ga-grant)

### **2025 Congregational Technology Grant (from generous Joliet CC legacy funds):**

This grant offers up to \$500 for electronics and technology upgrades, equipment, software, and projects (not meant to be used for normal operating expenses). From a generous legacy gift from Joliet Christian Church in Montana, their ministries continue after their doors have closed!

Each congregation in the Northern Lights Region may request up to \$500 in technology funds.

Apply for this grant funding at [northernlightsdisciples.org/2025-tech-grant](https://northernlightsdisciples.org/2025-tech-grant).



## Ready to apply for a grant?

**Regional Reconciliation Grants:** The new [NLR Reconciliation grant policy](#) created two annual windows for congregational reconciliation grant requests to be submitted for consideration. Congregations wishing to apply before the next deadline of August 1 (for Nov. 30 consideration) may refer to the policy and request form at [northernlightsdisciples.org/reconciliation](https://northernlightsdisciples.org/reconciliation). Many other resources for anti-racism/pro-reconciliation topics, immigration, books, and more may be found there.

## Become a Green Chalice Church

## CCC Billings Book Sale returns

Congratulations to our latest Green Chalice congregation,  
Englewood Christian Church in Yakima, WA!

### Become a Green Chalice Congregation during Earth Month 2025!

1. Start a Creation Care Team.
2. [Sign the Green Chalice Covenant](#) as a team or congregation.
3. Make at least 3 changes that demonstrate your congregation's commitment to caring for God's creation.



[EMAIL the following to Rev. Scott Hardin-Nieri:](#)

1. Congregation name, address, phone number, website, and name of Contact;
2. the date the Covenant was signed; and
3. the 3 or more creation care changes made.
4. Please attach a photo of the church, green team, or green work.

[Sign up for Green Chalice news!](#)

## Central Christian Church, Billings Spring Book Sale

1221 16th St. W  
Billings, MT 59102

**Mon, April 28 - Sat, May 3**  
**10 am - 4 pm MDT**

Over 75,000 books!  
.50 paperbacks / \$1 hardcovers  
Vinyl records, DVDs, CDs



**Registration  
and Housing  
are now open!**

Memphis, Tennessee  
July 12 - 15, 2025



## GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2025

Save the Date to join Disciples across the church as we gather.

The theme for the 2025 General Assembly is "BEYOND". The theme is based on the following scriptures: Ephesians 3:20-21, Colossians 3:12-17, 1 Corinthians 1:25-27 (28-30), Hebrews 8:5-7, and Luke 4:16-21

Now to the one who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to the power that is at work within us, to them be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen! Ephesians 3:20-21

<https://ga.disciples.org>



General Minister and President, Rev. Terri Hord Owens, issued a statement regarding Refugee Resettlements. In her statement she states, "We continue to stand in opposition to the dismantling

of the US refugee resettlement program which has enjoyed bipartisan support for decades, and we celebrate the ways in which Disciples congregations continue to welcome the stranger in their midst in spite of these unprecedented attacks."

[Read the full statement and learn of ways to get involved and offer support to affected communities.](#)



Rev. Terri Hord Owens, General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), extends heartfelt condolences in a letter to Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, Dean of the College of Cardinals, mourning the passing of beloved Pope Francis and honoring his enduring legacy of faith, compassion, and global leadership.



Rev. Hord Owens writes, "Pope Francis' deep commitment to Christian unity has encouraged and strengthened our ongoing dialogue. His openness and pastoral spirit have been a gift to our ecumenical journey. His care for the earth and its climate was matched by his care for the poor, the marginalized, and indeed, for all humanity."

[Click to read the entire letter.](#)

## Mental Health Awareness Month is coming in May

May will be Mental Health Awareness Month, and [NBA's](#) Mental Health and Wellness Team will be hosting several events throughout the month. Mark your calendars and plan to join in on these 2025 events!

[There is no cost to attend these events, but registration is required.](#)

(Note that these events are listed in Central Time.)



### NBA Mental Health Awareness Month 2025 Events

Wednesday, May 14<sup>th</sup>  
2:00pm ET/1:00pm CT

**Resilience in Transition:  
Navigating Change and Nurturing Care**

Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup>  
6:30pm ET/5:30pm CT

**Mental Health Sunday Service  
and Live Talkback**

Wednesday, May 28<sup>th</sup>  
12:30pm ET/11:30am CT

**Soul Care Lunch Break**

[Register at nbacares.org/events](https://nbacares.org/events)

# THRIVING *together*

## When Women Lead

**Thriving Together** is a workshop series for congregations. Rooted in questions the church is asking, **Thriving Together** seeks to engage clergy and laity in conversation in real time. This free workshop series is offered to congregations of any denomination attending as a group of 3-8 persons, with at least one clergy person and at least one lay leader. You may register for one, two, or three sessions.

**April 24, May 1, and May 8 at 7:30pm EDT / 6:30pm CDT / 5:30pm MDT / 4:30pm PDT**  
Each session is 90 minutes via Zoom. Registration is required but free.



### April 24 — Leadership Is a Journey

**Dr. Charisse Gillett**

President, Lexington Theological Seminary

"Are leaders born or made?" is an argument advanced to tease out discourse on the development of leadership skills, abilities, and aptitudes in those exercising leadership. In this session we will discuss why both understandings of leadership are important to cultivating leaders. We will also discuss the challenges women and women of color experience when exercising leadership.



### May 1 — For Such A Time As This: Why the Church Needs Women to Lead Right Now

**Rev. Erin Wathen**

Pastor, Grace Immanuel United Church of Christ, Louisville, KY; Certified Nonprofit Professional

In this workshop, we will explore how the under-representation of women in lead roles has weakened the public witness of our congregations, led to inertia and decline, and continues to limit the potential of the Church to take part in broader social transformation. We will also reflect on what unique gifts women might bring to the table—and the pulpit—"for such a time as this," and how faithful churches can lean into and embrace those gifts with courage and conviction.



### May 8 — Rise & Lead: Unlocking the Power of Women in Ministry

**Rev. LaVeeshia Pryor**

Pastor, Saint John AME Church, Frankfort, KY

The 21st-century woman in ministry has a lot to contend with. This 90-minute workshop will equip women in ministry with valuable strategies to strengthen their leadership and expand their impact. Through guided dialogues and actionable takeaways, participants will learn practical steps to enhance their leadership presence and navigate ministry challenges with clarity and purpose.

**Thriving Together** is a project of the Thriving Congregations Project at Lexington Theological Seminary, a Lilly Endowment, Inc. funded initiative.

Please visit  
<https://bit.ly/Spring2025ThrivingTogether>  
to register for this series,  
or simply scan the code!



**lexington**  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
Office of Lilly Projects