



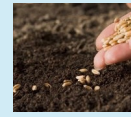
▶ *The NLR in Memphis & the 2025 General Assembly*



▶ *Interim Basics training now accepting applications*



▶ *One of our own: Making big ripples in the DOC*



▶ *Grants are available for a variety of your exciting ideas!*

PAGE 3

PAGE 6

PAGE 4-5

PAGE 2

Shaping tomorrow, together through generous giving
northernlightsdisciples.org/donations

● VOLUME 6, ISSUE 7 | ● JULY | ● 2025

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

NORTHERN LIGHTS

reflections

doing together that which we cannot do apart



Values & Mission

We Value...

- | Our identity as Disciples of Christ, including our shared history and traditions.
- | A spiritual life that is God-centered, Jesus-led, Spirit-filled.
- | Enthusiasm and commitment to the new thing God is calling us to do and be.
- | Diversity and inclusion in recognition of God's love for and welcome of all people.
- | Ministries of justice and compassion, locally and globally.
- | The practice of responsible stewardship of time, talent and treasure.
- | The development of strong relationships and connections among individual believers, congregations, denominations and faith communities.
- | Sustainability and excellence in our structures and practices.

OF CHURCH AND STATE: To separate or not to separate?

A MOMENT with the Regional Moderator - Doug Garner

A surprise move by the IRS last week that would allow pastors to back political candidates from the pulpit without losing their organization's tax-exempt status is burning like a wildfire through the halls of Christianity. A 1954 provision in the tax code called the Johnson Amendment says churches and other nonprofits could lose their tax-exempt status if they participate or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office. Though the rule was rarely enforced, most pastors strongly believed in the American ideal of the separation of church and state. But this new rule erases that line.



One of the founders of our denomination, Barton Stone, strongly advocated for the separation of church and state, believing that religious institutions should not be controlled by or exert control over the government. He emphasized that civil government should focus on secular matters, while religion should be a matter of individual conscience and free from state interference. Stone's views were rooted in his understanding of scripture and his desire to restore New Testament Christianity, which he believed called for a clear distinction between the two spheres. That separation in the New Testament is maybe best summed up by Jesus' response to Pilate when asked about kingship... "Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.'" (Jn 18:36)

Continued on Page 2



Sept 19 - 21

Women's Retreat at Cane Ridge West

Oct 3 - 4

Meet Alex & Xiomara, Global Ministries Mission Coworkers, at Cane Ridge West

Oct 3 - 5

2025 Clergy-plus-One Retreat at Gwinwood Retreat Center

May 2026

Northern Lights Regional Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

July 13-18, 2026

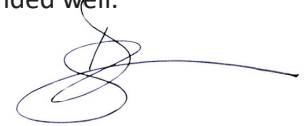
Summer Youth Camp at Gwinwood Retreat Center

And that is the way it was in the early centuries of the church. But, with the Edict of Milan in 313 CE, persecution of the infant church officially ended and before too long, Christianity became the official religion of the empire and just like that, the church traded spiritual authority for temporal power. The church relying on the state for vindication or validation has never gone well.

Disciples pastor Rev. Douglas Skinner reminded me of what Catholic theologian Hans Kung said of the church succumbing to her "un-nature." "The persecutions of the Jews and the crusades, the trial of heretics and burnings of witches, of the ecclesiastical colonialism and 'wars of religion,' of the false condemnation of men and ideas, the Church's frequent failures in the problems of slavery and war, and in social questions, in its identification with certain systems of society, government and thought, ... all the cruelty, fear and narrowness, all the laziness, cowardice and mediocrity, all the lack of love." That was the state of the church in Europe when the American founders put forward the idea of the separation of church and state.



Not only does this new rule fuel the dangerous rise of Christian nationalism, but I also frankly see it as fundamentally disrespectful. Part of the Disciples' ethos is not to tell people what to believe, but to equip people to make their own informed choices. We will discuss issues, but do not discuss personalities. So, as this rule moves forward, I encourage pastors to reject the temptation to back individual candidates from the pulpit, and I encourage congregations to support them as they turn away from that temptation. The mixing of church and state has never ended well.



NORTHERNLIGHTSDISCIPLINES.ORG/CALENDAR

GRANTS GRANTS GRANTS: Supporting congregations with grant funding

2025 CONGREGATIONAL TECHNOLOGY GRANT (from Joliet CC legacy funds): This grant offers each Northern Lights congregation up to \$500 for technology upgrades, electronics, A/V equipment, and software (not for normal operating expenses). Apply for funding at northernlightsdisciples.org/2025-tech-grant.

RECONCILIATION GRANT REQUEST DEADLINE: August 2025
northernlightsdisciples.org/reconciliation



MEMORIES FROM GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2025—Memphis, TN!

Send your photos to office@northernlightsdisciples.org



←THE NLR CREW

TOP (L-R): Rev. Seungil “Victor” Eo & family (Mannam CC); Rev. Sarah Almanza & Katie Peterson (FCC Puyallup); Beth Fox (FCC Longview); Karen & Rev. Mitch Becker (FCC Port Angeles); Rev. Chris Snow (N. Hill CC); Rev. Adam Janes (Othello CC); Mathew Goodrich (FCC Missoula); Rev. Mandy Gosik Central CC, Great Falls); Rev. Ruth Fletcher & Rev. Ron Greene, Rev. Paul & Patti Allen (Davenport, WA)

DO YOU HAVE GA PHOTOS TO SHARE ?

The 2025 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is in the books! There was so much packed into this amazing assembly that it was hard to find a time for everyone to gather for the Northern Lights Region photo... but here's a photo of 17 from our group of 40-plus!

Have photos to share? Send to office@northernlightsdisciples.org and we'll add them to our 2025 General Assembly photo album.



L: Ron Greene (Davenport, WA)
R: Adam Janes (Othello, WA)



L: Beth Fox (FCC Vancouver, WA)
R: Ruth Fletcher (Davenport, WA)



Katee Kostecki & Mat Goodrich (Missoula, MT)

MORE→

GA-2513: Disability Justice and Inclusion

By GA-2513 presenter, Northern Lights clergy, Rev. Chris Snow, North Hill CC, Spokane

At the 2025 General Assembly I had the honor of co-presenting GA-2513: Concerning Disability Justice and Inclusion In All Ministries Within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. I co-wrote and presented the resolution with Topher



Endress, Associate Minister at FCC in Columbia, Missouri. This resolution was the product of many conversations and hours of wordsmithing, but arises out of the need for all aspects of the church to do better at becoming more accessible to those with disabilities. What better way to share with you my thoughts on this resolution than to share with you the words I shared on the plenary floor in defense of this resolution:

“As pastor who has had a lifelong disability I have recognized the need for recognized and formal work within our denomination around Disability and Accessibility as we regularly declare that we are a church where the table is open to all. Since attending the Disciples Seminarian’s conference around 2008, I have sought to work within the existing structures of our General ministries to engage in disability advocacy and accessibility. I recognized that the Pro-Reconciliation Anti-Racism ministries as doing important work that is similar to that needed by the disability community, but AR-PR has a pointed focus solely on racism. I have looked to the National Benevolent Association, our health and human service ministry of our Church, and found great support that helped bring together those who are passionate about work on accessibility for those with disabilities.

Continued on Page 5

Rev. Chris Snow co-presented Resolution GA-2513 to the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and it was approved!



**RESOLUTION
GA-2513:
CONCERNING
DISABILITY JUSTICE
AND INCLUSION IN
ALL MINISTRIES
WITHIN THE
CHRISTIAN
CHURCH (DISCIPLES
OF CHRIST) IN THE
UNITED STATES
AND CANADA**

GA-2513: Disability Justice and Inclusion in all CC (DOC) ministries

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

While our church has a history of recognizing the various minorities and marginalized groups that are a part of our great denomination, in no particular order (and I apologize if I left your group out), NAPAD, Obra Hispana, National Convocation, Disciples Women Ministries, and AllianceQ, but the minority and marginalized groups that a majority of us will find ourselves to be a part of at some point in our lives, individuals with disabilities, have not historically had work done to make all interactions of our church accessible. (And I am thankful to see that this year we have a ramp for our stage.) But accessibility is more than just about physical accessibility.

I have worked within local congregations sharing my own knowledge but also recognizing the need for resources for more than just the congregations that I am personally involved in, while not reinventing the wheel each and every time. While other denominations including the UCC and UMC have disability ministry programs that provide both resources and trainings to their congregations we do not yet have an easily recognized manner in which to resource our congregations, regions, and general church to be better equipped to serve those with disabilities by being in ministry with and alongside those with disabilities rather than having ministries for those with disabilities. We do not yet have a way to engage in disability advocacy as the whole embodiment of our denomination in a time where we have seen language of inclusion within all aspects of life in the United States of America is seen as something to be derided rather than celebrated.

PASSED! ↓

During the 2025 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) several important resolutions were passed including GA-2517 Changes to The Design and GA-2513 Resolution Concerning Disability Justice and Inclusion in all Ministries within the Christian Church. Three emergency resolutions addressing timely and pressing issues impacting our communities and world were also adopted.

LEARN MORE



This resolution before us seeks to declare that yes, those with disabilities are created in the image of God and deserve to be in full community within the whole embodiment of our church. This resolution puts forth the call for us all to do better and make easily accessible and continue to create the resources to equip our congregations, regions, and general church to be more accessible for those with disabilities and advocate on their behalf.”

This resolution passed with great enthusiasm from those gathered in the plenary hall after many statements in support of the need for this work in all aspects of our church.

I have been working with a number of other clergy from around our denomination ([Disciples Access](#)) to not only advocate for changes around accessibility but to create (living) resources for all aspects of our church, including: Church Accessibility Audit, Multi- and Single-Day event planning

checklist, and Book List for those seeking to learn more. It is our hope that in the coming months we will have a more visible online presence within the denomination but until then you can join us on Facebook, search for [Disciples Access](#).

Peace in Christ,
Chris Snow

Interim Basics Training: Applications now being accepted

APPLICATION DEADLINE for this session is Thursday, August 14th

Class: Interim Ministry Basics

When: Mondays, September 8-October 27, 2025 from 4-6 pm Pacific Time

Location: Online/Zoom

Cost: \$600 (Regional assistance may be available)

Application Deadline: Thursday, August 14, 2025

Application Link: <https://forms.gle/zxnWijEtKkVfdcc26>

This course is limited to 25 participants; once the application period closes applicants will be alerted whether they will be a part of the class. Priority is given to those without training, currently serving as an interim minister, or in Search and Call for an interim position. Applications go to Regional staff for recommendation.

Topics to be covered include –

- What is interim ministry? And how is it different from settled ministry?
- What gifts & skills are needed for interim ministry? What tools?
- What issues do congregations need to talk about in the interim time?
- What insights from Family Systems Theory can enhance our ministry?
- What is the role of the Transition Team?
- How do we lead a meaningful spiritual discernment/visioning?
- How do we handle issues of change? And of conflict?
- How do we “take these lessons home?” [Practical application]

Learn more, find answers, and have your questions answered at disciplemissions.org/dhm_events/interim-ministry-basics-fall-2025

You may also email DisciplesInterims@gmail.com

200 STUDENTS IN RECENT YEARS & GREAT RESPONSES!

EIGHT TWO-HOUR SESSIONS

UPDATED CURRICULUM IS: “INTERACTIVE, COLLEGIAL, AND PRACTICAL.”

FIND THE COURSE DESCRIPTION AND SYLLABUS HERE



NORTHERN LIGHTS REGION: Let's be social! Connect with us.

The Region recently joined the ranks of Instagram—connect with us at [instagram.com/nlr.disciples](https://www.instagram.com/nlr.disciples) as we get started!

WANT MORE NORTHERN LIGHTS? Follow, Like, and Check In:

[Facebook](#) [Instagram](#) [YouTube](#) [Website](#)

[We are no longer on Twitter/X.]