

Northern Lights Reflections

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

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Giving Thanks

Reflections with the Regional Minister, Rev. Paul Allen

The fall months give us time to reflect on the many blessings of the past year. The rush of summer is over, and we can begin to look forward to the season of Advent, Christmas, and the start of a new year. Usually, around this time, my family will go to the garage to look for Christmas decorations. We will dust off the boxes and look for the things we want to place around the house, but we always find a box that captures our imagination and lets us reminisce about seasons past.

When we moved to Davenport, Patti and I found the first set of ornaments my mother sent to us after Seminary when we moved to my first congregation in Farmville, North Carolina. She had packed brightly colored balls, white lights, and ceramic angels, but she also packed the church mouse, dressed as a minister in a felt robe, which I would always place on top of my Christmas tree as a child. Just the sight of this ornament made me remember that first Christmas in a different town and a new ministry.

We also found some of the crocheted ornaments my grandmother made throughout the years. I remember watching her fingers work as she made these ornaments, then picking out the one I wanted for my tree. My grandmother passed away years ago, but every time I see them, I think of her and the time and energy she spent giving these gifts to me.



Continued on Page 2



Each of us can recall God's wonderful spiritual gifts of the past and present, and we look forward to many blessings in the future. Yet we must also remember that one of the responsibilities of our faith is to share our gifts with the church and with others. It is not a gift unless it is given freely, and it is not a blessing unless it fills another's life with hope and joy.



We give thanks for the gifts of our congregations, the Northern Lights Region, the General Church, and our connection with all of our siblings in faith. We are truly blessed, and as we look forward, we see significant opportunities to serve and grow. In the next few weeks, think about all that God has provided for you and your family, remember how you felt when you received these gifts, and then think about what it will be like to share them. Let us be a blessing to the world. Amen.

Celebration of Ministry Month

The Northern Lights Region understands our call as a Region to care for our clergy. The pastoral calling is one of great joy and fulfillment, yet, it can also be a challenging journey. The Lane-Salmon Clergy Assistance Fund and Clergy Scholarship Fund allow the Region to assist clergy during times of crisis and to help strengthen them by providing funds for continuing education.

The clergy assistance grants began with gifts initiated in honor of Rev. Dr. Donald Salmon and gifts given by Bob Lane. The Lane-Salmon Fund Clergy Assistance is a legacy of the Northwest Region. The Clergy Scholarship Fund is made possible by the former Montana Region who established the fund and ensured the principle would be carried forward by the Northern Lights Region.

Income to the funds comes from the regional policy of receiving offerings at all clergy ordination and installation services in the Region. The policy requests that all services of ordination and installation receive an offering to benefit the Lane-Salmon & Clergy Scholarship Funds. **During October, Celebration of the Ministry Month, a region-wide appeal to add to the funds is made. This allows the Region to continue the essential ministry of supporting pastors, chaplains, and students during times of need and while pursuing education. Gifts received are divided equally between the two funds.**



You are encouraged to support this ministry of caring for clergy.

Scan the QR code or visit northernlightsdisciples.org.

Checks may be written to the Northern Lights Region marked 'Lane-Salmon' and mailed to:

Northern Lights Region

4227 S Meridian, #C615 / Puyallup, WA 98373

Learn more about the Lane-Salmon grant program and its long history at northernlightsdisciples.org/lane-salmon-and-clergy-scholarship-funds.

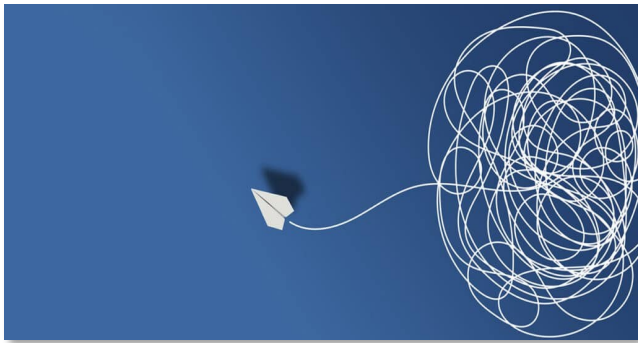
To request clergy assistance or an education grant, email the Regional Office: office@northernlightsdisciples.org

New Congregational Transformation Grant Policy and Portal

By Rev. Dr. Sacia Vik, NLR Transformation Team member

The goal of the regional Transformation Team is to provide information, resources, and support for congregations and congregational leaders interested in renewal and transformation. One of the resources we have developed is a grant of up to \$2,500 per year for special programs and education used for the purpose of congregational transformation. This may include education, training, or skill development for clergy and lay leaders, initiatives developed for congregational learning, and ministry development related to transformation.

Go to northernlightsdisciples.org/transformation/grant-application for information.



WHAT IS CONGREGATIONAL TRANSFORMATION?

Congregational transformation has a variety of understandings, but it usually begins with questions of discipleship. For example: Do you wonder if you and/or your congregation can do something different to better reflect the power of God's love in this world? Do you wonder if your congregation will exist for another 20, 10, or even 5 years? Do you wonder how your congregation can better address the problems of your community such as hunger and homelessness? Do you wonder if your congregation should be politically involved? And, if so, how? By paying attention to the questions you are asking, and the thoughts you are pondering, you may come to realize that to "be the church we say we are" we need to make changes. And those changes involve new learnings and new understandings. And those new understandings take time to be taught, absorbed, and implemented. So, in short, congregational transformation is a process that takes time, exploration, and effort that begins with questions of discipleship. The Regional Transformation Team is able to guide you to some preliminary first steps, as well as offer financial support through this grant. For more information contact the team or visit northernlightsdisciples.org/transformation.

Reconciliation Grant thank you note & update

First of all thank you for your support. Our English Language School is up and running again with the new school year. **This is our 48th year of providing English Language School to refugees and immigrants.** Each student has certain parts

of the language they want to improve, so each tutor develops curriculum based on the student. We currently have 11 tutors and 14 students enrolled in our ELS; not all attend each session. Our English learners are from all over the world. We have Afghanistan, China, Mexico, South Korea, and Taiwan currently represented in our school.

Normally we take summer off because many of our students have children at home, but this summer we were able to have three high school students in class from France, New Guinea, and Brazil. These students became fast friends. After spending the summer in our ELS program they all felt more confident about starting high school in their new country.



We find students through the relationships we have with Refugee and Immigrant Connections of Spokane, World Relief, and Lutheran Community Services, although many of our students come to us through word of mouth within their own communities.

We will use the grant for more teaching supplies as well as tutor and recruitment.

Thank you for your support,

Todd Gossett - English Language School Director,
Country Homes Christian Church, Spokane

[Learn more about Country Homes' ESL ministry here!](#)

Celebrating 140 years!

November
14-16
2025



**140 YEAR
CELEBRATION**
1885-2025



**COME & CELEBRATE 140
YEARS OF FAITH**

2701 S Russell St. Missoula, MT 59801

**First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
in Missoula, MT is celebrating
140 Years of Ministry in November!**

1885—2025

Over the weekend of November 14-16 we will be hosting trivia night, a special dinner, and Worship to celebrate our ministry, and we would love for you to join us! Learn more about what is happening at fccmissoula.org/140.

You'll also find information about our 140th fundraising project, find FCC merch, and purchase a ticket to the dinner on Saturday.

We hope you will celebrate 140 years of faith with us!



No One Gets Out Alive: End of Life Seminars at Journey CC

Journey Christian Church in Seattle is planning a five-Sunday seminar series on end of life planning—**No One Gets Out Alive**—(see topics and dates below)—and anyone with interest is welcome. Their flyer shares:

"It's good to give thought to how you want the end of your life to go. At Journey, we are planning a series of presentations on various aspects of approaching the end of life. These will be both in person and on Zoom.

We all want to put off dying as long as possible, but it's so much better for everyone if you can do some preparation ahead of time. Please join us for these seminars designed to help you plan in advance and bring you added peace of mind."

The series will be available in person or on Zoom:

Sundays, Oct. 19-Nov. 16 at 6:30-8 pm

Journey Christian Church, 1933 125th St NE, Seattle

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88267206987?
pwd=3GbOSxX2s6AJxzKP8RafCJRaREiKqh.1](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88267206987?pwd=3GbOSxX2s6AJxzKP8RafCJRaREiKqh.1)

Mtg ID: 882 6720 6987 Passcode: 852947



[Print a flyer to share](#) - all are welcome to attend.

Oct. 19: Finding Spiritual Peace

Rev. Susanna Orensky, pastor, Journey Christian Church

Oct. 26: Hospice 101: A Tale of Two Grandparents

Jordan Drew, LPN & Clinical Education Liaison, Continuum Care

Nov. 2: Taming the Moving Mess, Downsizing and Decluttering

Lynda Dowell, Realtor & Senior Home Coach, Keller Williams Realty

Nov. 9: Navigating Conversations with Family & Others about End-of-life Wishes

Rebecca Crichton, Exec. Director, NW Center for Creative Aging

Nov. 16: Six Essential Documents for Estate Planning

Jonathan Bowman, attorney: estate planning, elder law, & probate

Northern Lights Reflections

Planning Ahead for 2026 Regional Assembly!

*"I will call this to mind, and therefore I have hope.
The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases;
God's mercies never come to an end.
They are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness."*

Lamentations 3:20-23 NRSV

While still in the planning stages, the Regional Assembly Planning Team is putting its heads together to design a meaningful weekend that will unite, inspire, and inform.

Mark your calendars as the third in-person assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Northern Lights Region unfolds (virtual options will also be available)!

**Friday evening, May 1, 2026 through
Sunday morning, May 3, 2026
at First Christian Church in Kennewick, WA**

**Keynote Speaker: Rev. Chris Dorsey,
President and CEO, [Disciples Home Missions](#)**

Gwinwood annual meeting — Owner churches: RSVP now!

**Dear Western Washington Congregations
(Tahoma & Salish Sea areas):**

Gwinwood Retreat Center will hold its annual meeting on Saturday, November 22 at 11 am—we hope you can be there! The meeting will be in person at Gwinwood, or you may choose to join on Zoom. Lunch will be provided.



Church Owners (western Washington Northern Lights Region Disciples churches) may register two delegates plus their pastor to vote on agenda items. Non-voters are also welcome.

Please:

+RSVP by November 14 if you'll be joining us for lunch.
+Select delegates and [let Gwinwood know who they are.](#)

On the agenda: Updates on efforts to rebuild McKinnon lodge, election of trustees, our finances and investments, the latest news on what's happening at Gwinwood, and our positive outlook for the future.

Gwinwood is also looking for candidates to join the board of trustees. Should you have nominees, please forward those to director@gwinwood.org.

We ask that each owner church [RSVP to this event](#) and also let the Board know who your voting members are.

Hope to see you there!

John Richards, Chair,
Gwinwood Retreat Center
Board of Trustees

Church Technology Grants of up to \$500

(Every NLR congregation is eligible!)



The 2025 regional technology grant offers NLR congregations up to \$500 for electronics and tech upgrades, equipment, software, and projects (not to be used for normal operating expenses). Each Northern Lights congregation may request up to \$500 in technology funds.


Apply NOW:

northernlightsdisciples.org/2025-tech-grant

Made possible by a legacy gift from now-closed Joliet Christian Church in Montana, their tradition of service continues even after their visible ministry has ended.

CONVERSATION CAFÉ FOR CONGREGATIONS

AN ONLINE LUNCH DISCUSSION




Attention: Clergy, Lay Leaders, and Church Staff

Join us from your home or church office for an engaging hour curated to discuss topical menu items relevant to congregational life, innovation in ministry, and supportive resources.


Tuesday, October 21, 2025 11:30am CST	Congregational Identity Values, Mission & Vision
Tuesday, December 16, 2025 11:30am CST	Research Strategies To Learn About Your Immediate Community

Visit www.discipleshomeemissions.org under Congregational Vitality and Innovation to find a Café conversation guides ahead of the virtual lunch dates.

Scan to Register



Contact information:
Rev. Derrick L. Perkins, Sr.
Director for Congregational Vitality & Innovation
dperkins@dhm.disciples.org



**CONGREGATIONAL
VITALITY and INNOVATION**
Disciples Home Missions

Meet your regional DCEF Building and Capital Services Advisor

Is your community of faith facing issues with its place of worship? Whether it's delayed maintenance or a need for mission revitalization, [Disciples Church Extension Fund](#)— a general ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada—is here to support your congregation.

Rev. Rosario Ibarra serves as the Building & Capital Services Advisor for the Northern Lights Region. She can help you with building planning, from assessing your structures through a building evaluation, to assisting your faith community find the funding it needs for its next church project. Rosario can also provide fundraising guidance.

Rosario would love to hear from you and your congregation! Contact her at ribarra@disciplescef.org or 317-635-6500 extension 2547.

