

Connected in Covenant

- 1 | A Moment with the Moderator
- 2 | Central CC, Billings Book Sale
| Disciples of Christ merchandise
- 3 | Anti-racism/ Pro-reconciliation
| Reconciliation Ministry Special Offering
- 4 | Invitation from Welcome Table CC
| Disciples Mission Fund Week
| Retired Clergy Group reconvening in Oct



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“Can We...?”

A Moment with the Moderator, Mary Larsen

“Nana,” a little voice from the back seat chimed, “Can we plant a seed?”

It was the spring of 2025, and my grandkids were having a snack as we drove home from preschool. I inquired as to what seed, and the reply was, “This seed.”

They were having apples for their snack and Maisie had dug out a little seed from her apple. I love to encourage their sense of discovery and investigations, so I quickly said yes. Little brother William asked if he could



plant one also. When we got home, we took the two very small seeds and planted them in a flower planter on the patio. We put little sticks with each child's name to remember which seed was where.

Now, I had little hope that anything would come from this experiment, what with a seed from an apple that had probably been in cold storage at the grocery store since the fall before. We watered the planter and watched each day. After about a week, the little ones gradually lost interest and moved on to other interests. Then one day, about three weeks later, I noticed a little sprout. I figured it was a weed but left it. Another two weeks of growth and sure enough a little apple tree sprout was reaching skyward. The entire family was so excited. We watched it grow, watered it and by fall the little tree was about 12” high with a dozen little leaves. Alas, the other seed never sprouted. Winter came and the little sapling lost its leaves; there it was a skinny straight stick-no branches. Well. We were sure it wouldn't survive the winter. Come this spring (2026) we watched for signs, but nothing. Until one day in late spring we noticed some little nubs on the stick. Well, with lots of love, warm sun, plenty of water, the little tree flourished. It is now at least 5 feet tall, with branches and lots of leaves! Our next challenge will be transplanting it this winter.

- Can WE plant a seed? -

Continued on Page 2

Anti-racism/Pro-reconciliation training opportunities

With few exceptions, all active and Retired-active ordained and commissioned clergy with Northern Lights regional standing, as well as our in-care candidates, are required to complete six hours of Anti-racism/Pro-reconciliation in 2026.

Those unable to attend our two in-person sessions may opt to take a six-hour training held by another Disciples Region or by other approved denominations under the umbrella of Churches Uniting in Christ.



We have been adding to a list of approved online trainings at the Northern Lights website as they are made known to us at northernlightsdisciples.org/boundaries-arpr-training. You may also contact the Regional Office to inquire about other trainings you hear of.

Other approved virtual or online opportunities include:

- SW Region – Sept. 19 (Spanish) or Dec. 12 at 8 am-2 pm PT: [REGISTER](#)
- FL Region – Sept. 21 at 6-11 am PT (plus pre-reading 3 chapters of *The Racial Healing Handbook* by Anneliese Singh): [REGISTER](#)
- Tennessee Region – Oct. 24 at 7 am-2 pm PT: [REGISTER](#)
- UMC General Commission on Religion & Race – Recorded on YouTube – On your schedule (in 2026): *"Racial Justice: A Mandate to Our Discipleship"* 4-Part Webinar Series. [VIEW MORE INFO & LINK TO VIDEOS HERE](#) – All four videos must be completed for a total of six hours. Share a screenshot from the end of each session with the Regional Office to receive credit.

2026 Reconciliation Ministry - Special Offering



Restoration – Hope in Action

Sunday, September 27th - Sunday, October 4th

Five times a year our denomination receives special offerings to support a mission focus in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). In September the focus offering benefits the DoC Reconciliation Ministry and invites you to consider a special over and above individual gift to this fund. Read more about this offering and its many beneficiaries [at the Reconciliation Ministry website](#). Half of funds received through this offering assist in funding reconciliation projects and ministries in the Northern Lights Region. The Region has a special fund set up for grants for congregations working toward reconciling and expanding our love and care for others who may be in the margins: [Read the NLR Grant Policy here](#)

