



“Keep the Main thing...The Main Thing”

“Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.” (Matthew 16:13-20 NRSV).

**Virtual
Regional Assembly 2020
November 6-8, 2020**

**Pre-Assembly Seminar for Clergy
“Creating a Healthy Balance in Ministry: Theological and Practical Perspectives”**

Friday, November 6, 2020, 9:00 am - Noon

Facilitator: Rev. Shawn Wallace

Panel Members: Rev. Leroy Bryant, Bishop Zedric Clayton, Rev. Dr. Stan McDougal,
Rev. Ann Pickett-Parker, and Rev. Donna Rountree

(Continuing Education Credit will apply)

Special Guests

Rev. Dr. William Leroy Lee
Director, Black Ministers' Retreat



Preacher

Rev. Dr. William Leroy Lee is a teacher and preacher of the Word of God. Raised in Nuttsville, VA, Rev. Lee first discovered and nurtured his love of learning. This love led him to earn degrees from Virginia State University, Duke University, and Ashland Theological Seminary.

Rev. Lee is a born teacher. Whether in a small classroom in Stonewall Jackson Junior High, the campus of Roanoke College or Duke University; the Rev. Dr. William Lee teaches people to think critically and ask questions.

Rev. Lee has a passion for people. When his father was diagnosed with cancer, he was quickly confronted with the disadvantages many people face when it comes to health care. This realization sparked an idea to provide health care to all. His idea became what is known today as New Horizons Health Care. The first faith-based health care center in Roanoke, Va. Thousands of underserved people now have access to health care.

Rev. Lee is the people's preacher. He dedicated 39 years to the people of Loudon Avenue Christian Church and now in retirement he continues to preach and teach the Word of God to all. Re. Dr. William Lee is the second born to the late Leon and Thelma Lee. He married his college sweetheart Dana Barnes; they are the parents of Aaron (Nina) and Sarah (Marcus) and the proud grandparents of Sae'Quan and Rebecca.

Shawn Wallace is the Senior Pastor at First Christian Church of Rogers.

Shawn has a passion for true and authentic unity in the Church—a unity and depth of relationship that transcends racial, theological, political, cultural, and socio-economic barriers. He hopes that all people would come to know each other better and seek to mutually aid each other so that all may be truly free and filled with God's abundant life.

Shawn married Michelle (Miller) Wallace in 2007. They enjoy country, swing, and salsa dancing together. They strive their best to raise 2 daughters, a son, and a black lab! Shawn's hobbies include soccer, wake boarding, rock climbing, snow skiing, snowboarding, and traveling. Shawn is high-energy and an avid TCU fan who loved playing "Superfrog," the TCU mascot, for six years.

Rev. Shawn Wallace
Senior Pastor, First Christian Church, Rogers, AR



Pre-Assembly Seminar Facilitator

Logan J. Smith, Music Director
Park Hill Christian Church,
North Little Rock, AR



Logan J. Smith is the Music Director at Park Hill Christian Church in North Little Rock. He joined the Ministry Team in August of 2017. He holds a Master of Music in Conducting from the University of Central Arkansas. Logan is a multi-instrumentalist, focusing on Guitar, Bass, and Trombone. He is also a BMI composer and has had compositions and arrangements performed all over the world.

He has served as President and Assistant Collegiate Province Representative of the Kappa Iota chapter of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia. He taught Middle School and High School prior to teaching Music Appreciation at the University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton.

Logan lives in Conway with his daughter, Lauren Joy, and wife Allison.

As a Twenty-First Century trendsetter, Pastoral Pioneer and Bridge-Builder, the **Rev. Dr. Christal L. Williams** is a leading voice, echoing through the airways of time, with a soul-stirring message of God's Love, Kingdom Authority and Deeper Revelation for all people. As an Inspirational Preacher, Spiritual Coach and Prophetic Administrator Rev. Christal Williams offers a grassroots and organic way of asking one to dig deeper into their understanding of God, Faith and Life and Church. This is witnessed in her Life's work as one of the Associate Regional Minister for the Urban Metro Area (Plus) Congregations in the Illinois-Wisconsin Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). As an influential leader and relationship cultivator Christal takes to heart her personal mission to love, equip and encourage all persons toward a reconciling relationship with God.

Her tenure in ministry has been wide spread throughout Illinois, Iowa, Ohio, and Indiana. Pastor Christal has engaged in ministry around the world; having traveled extensively to China, Guatemala, Puerto Rico, Israel-Palestine, Egypt, West and South Africa, and Europe for Ministry and Cross-cultural exchanges. Christal is committed to ecumenism, accompaniment, hospitality and nurturing global partnerships.

Rev. Dr. Cristal Williams
Regional Minister
Christian Church in Tennessee



Disciples Women Evening Fellowship
Keynote Speaker

Rev. Alex Ruth, D.Min, CPC, ELI-MP
Pastor, Marshfield Christian Church
Associate Director of Disciples Men



Disciples Men Evening Fellowship
Keynote Speaker

"My passion for ministry to men stems from my own experiences of struggling to find, understand, and uncover my identity as a Christian man. I have benefited from many great examples of men who live out their faith and masculinity in different, yet life-giving ways. I have been blessed to serve as pastor of Marshfield Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) since 2006, and have worked with church leaders to develop ministry opportunities for the men of the church to grow and learn together. I am profoundly appreciative of the opportunity to work with Rev. Greg Alexander and the General Conference of Disciples Men as we grow and develop the vital ministry to men in our denomination, and especially in our local communities of faith. Truly, the future is bright for Disciples Men!"

Tentative Schedule

Saturday, October 17, 2020

Virtual Workshops

9:00 am- 10:00 am	Authentic Spirituality in Stewardship-Rev. Dr. Christopher Wilson
10:15 am -11:15 am	Clergy Wellness Soul Care Conversations: A time to pause and process...together- Rev. Angela Whitenhill
10:15 am-11:15am	Adults Working in Youth Ministry: Q&A with Ronny Nowell
11:30 pm-12:30 pm	Computer Technology: What Are We Learning from the Pandemic-Dr. Jeffrey Murdock
1:30 am- 2:30 pm	Being the Church When It Is Not Possible to Go to Church- Rev. Dr. Jarrett Banks
*2:00 pm-3:00 pm	Youth Devotional: Dealing with Frustration- Youth Grades 6-12
2:30 pm-3:45 pm	How Church Boards Can Survive a Pandemic- Rev. Dr. David Britt
4:00 pm- 5:00 pm	Children's Worship and Wonder-Faciltor to be announced

Friday, November 6, 2020

9:00 am- Noon Pre-Assembly Seminar for Clergy

Saturday, November 7, 2020

8:45 am	Gathering
9:00 am	All Assembly Welcome
9:15 am	All Assembly Worship – “Rev. Dr. William Lee” Preacher
Break	
10:15 am	Ministry Highlight Videos - Missions & General Unit Partnerships
10:25 am	Business Session
	Financial Reports & Minutes
	State of Region Report
	Nominating Report
	Moderator's Report
	Recognition of Outgoing Officers
	Installation of Officers
Lunch Break	
2:00-3:00	Networking opportunities
	General Networking
	Children's Worship and Wonder (Grades K-5)
	Youth Hangout and Games (Grades 6-12)
	Adults Working with Youth Q&A
Afternoon Break	
6:00 pm	Fellowship Dinner Gatherings hosted as separate Zoom Meetings- Disciple Women, Disciple Men, Chaplains, Musicians, Regional Elders

GRR Vision Statement

“We are the Great River Region, a movement that empowers Disciples congregations to transform the world through the gospel of Jesus Christ”

GRR Mission Statement

“We REACH, TEACH, AND TRANSFORM lives through Christ's Love”

Sunday, November 8

Sunday Worship Sermon and Music recorded and distributed to congregations to use in your Sunday worship services (optional)

YOUTH Virtual Regional Assembly 2020

Workshop Opportunities for October 17, 2020

10:15 am-11:15 am

“Adults Working in Youth Ministry: Q&A with Ronny Nowell”

Leading a youth ministry is a big undertaking. Leading during a pandemic adds a new dimension to every aspect of youth ministry. Here is your opportunity to speak with someone with experience working with youth under normal circumstances. He will be happy to share things that work and help with things that might not be going as well as you hoped. Come and share with the group and learn together how to bring our youth to a meaningful relationship with Christ, even during a pandemic.

2:00 pm-3:00 pm

“Youth Devotional: Dealing with Frustration” (Grades 6-12)

This is a special workshop offered for our youth in grades 6-12. Everyone has felt frustration during this pandemic. Come and meet with youth across the region and find some healthy ways to deepen your spiritual strategies for dealing with this frustration.

Regional Assembly November 7, 2020

2:00 pm-3:00 pm

“Children’s Worship and Wonder” (Grades K-5)

2:00 pm-3:00 pm

“Youth Hangout: Online Games and Discussion” (Grades 6-12)

2:00 pm-3:00 pm

“Adults Working with Youth: Q&A with Ronny Nowell”

6:00 pm

“Online Escape Room Game” (Youth Grades 6-12)

Regional Assembly Workshops

October 17, 2020

9:00 am-10:00 am

“Authentic Spirituality in Stewardship”

How can we be spiritual stewards of the resources God has given us, during these uncertain times? This workshop will explore a wholistic approach to the word and theology of being a “Steward.” If we are entrusted by God to care for all that is in God’s world, then our role in stewardship is an ongoing role as disciples of Jesus and of our heritage of faith.

We will explore six themes of stewardship and see how they are all interdependent on one another. A spirituality of stewardship, to be authentic, should not be what we do, but who we are as God’s people.



Rev. Dr. Christopher Wilson is currently serving as the senior pastor of Saint Andrew Christian Church in Olathe, KS. He is a fourth generation Disciple and multi-generational Disciple minister. Chris has been regularly involved in the wider church. He is currently connected to three wider ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). He serves on the Board for Bethany Fellows. He serves as the board chair for Christian Board of Publication/Chalice Press. Lastly, he is a member of the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. He is married to Rev. Jennifer Schooley for 24 years. He has two children: Sara who is 18 and Walker who is 13.

10:15 am-11:15 am

“Clergy Wellness Soul Care Conversations: A time to pause and process...together”

With all that is swirling around for clergy as they navigate the demands of Pandemic culture, technology, and societal tensions, it is often hard to take a moment to pause, process, and find clarity for the path moving forward. This workshop was created to give clergy a space to breath, process, and engage intentional, conversations with others facing the same stressors to:

- help process their own stress and confusion while leading during these trying times
- share helpful resources
- create space for collaborative problem solving and brainstorming idea for moving forward

Rev. Angela Whitenhill serves as the Mental Health Initiative Manager of the National Benevolent Association, the health and social service general ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). She speaks, preaches, teaches across the country bringing awareness about mental health and wellness in the church, and helps break stigma regarding mental illness, and issues of oppressive that impact mental health.



10:15 am-11:15 am

“Adults Working in Youth Ministry: Q&A with Ronny Nowell”

Leading a youth ministry is a big undertaking. Leading during a pandemic adds a new dimension to every aspect of youth ministry. Here is your opportunity to speak with someone with experience working with youth under normal circumstances. He will be happy to share things that work and help with things that might not be going as well as you hoped. Come and share with the group and learn together how to bring our youth to a meaningful relationship with Christ, even during a pandemic.



Rev. Ronny Nowell is an Associate Pastor at First Christian Church in Rogers. Ronny has been active leading youth ministries since 1991. His love for young people and vision for helping to raise a new generation of faithful Christians keep him focused in that direction. Ronny has successfully grown a flourishing, award-winning youth program -- CROSS-Training. In addition, he has a passion for mission trips and plans yearly service trips for Youth and Adults.

11:30 am-12:30 pm

“Computer Technology: What Are We Learning from the Pandemic?”



We have all had to change the way we do things during this pandemic. Technology has become an important part of our daily lives. This workshop will cover how we can best utilize the technologies that we have and are comfortable with to reach our congregations’ spiritual needs.

Dr. Jeffery Murdock serves as minister of music at First Christian Church of Rogers, Arkansas. He is internationally known as a conductor, clinician, and adjudicator. He currently serves as Associate Director of Choral Activities and Associate Professor of Music at the University of Arkansas where he conducts the Inspirational Chorale, the Men’s Chorus, and teaches courses within the choral music education curriculum.

1:30 pm-2:30 pm

“Being the Church When It Is Not Possible to Go to Church”

In mid-March 2020, the COVID-19 Pandemic fundamentally changed life and ministry for pastors and churches all over the world. The need for “social distancing” forced churches to discover how “to be the church” in a world where it is no longer permitted to “go to church.”

Rev. Dr. Jarrett Banks In this workshop, Great River Region Church Planter, Rev. Dr. Jarrett Banks, will share the ways Northshore Disciples is being the church through service projects and outdoor gatherings in southeastern Louisiana.



2:00 pm-3:00 pm

**“Youth Devotional: Dealing with Frustration”
(Grades 6-12)**

This is a special workshop offered for our youth in grades 6-12. Everyone has felt frustration during this pandemic. Come and meet with youth across the region and find some healthy ways to deepen your spiritual strategies for dealing with this frustration.

2:30 pm-3:45 pm

“How Church Boards Can Survive a Pandemic”

Churches need clear servant leadership in normal times, and even more in times of stress. This workshop will focus on why the work of church boards is important, and explore ways that boards can serve their congregations during this pandemic.



Rev. Dr. David T. Britt *David T. Britt (M.Div., PhD) serves as pastor of FCC Pineville, LA. He has worked with many boards as CEO of the United Way of Central Louisiana and conducts board training workshops every year.*

4:00 pm-5:00 pm

“Children’s Worship and Wonder”

Rev. Lisa Engelken is excited to serve as Coordinator of Children Worship & Wonder at Disciples Home Missions. She has been a trainer in Children Worship & Wonder for 18 years. Children Worship & Wonder is a Montessori-based worship with children. She serves on a team with 20 other trainers. In July 2015 Lisa became a trainer to train more trainers. Lisa was called into ministry to help share story the people of God's faithful stories-not to just children but to their families.



The Great River Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)



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August 7, 2020

Dear Congregational Leaders;

Greetings on behalf of your Regional Assembly Planning Committee. Due to concerns with the global pandemic, the Regional Board made the decision to host the 2020 Regional Assembly by virtual platform. We will continue with our timely theme; "Keep the Main Thing...THE MAIN THING" Matthew 16:13-20.

We will have our workshop sessions on October 17, 2020. The Ministers' seminar will be November 6, 2020. The All Region Worship Service and Business Meeting will be November 7, 2020. A Sunday Morning virtual worship service will be provided to each congregation to share with members as they wish.

This is an exciting opportunity for even more of our members to experience the educational opportunities, worship, and business session of the Great River Region. We hope to see even more engagement by those who have not been able to participate due to financial or travel constraints in the past. As always, the Regional Assembly is open to any member of the Great River Region.

Look for future information on registration and opportunities for mission work which will be shared at the Regional Assembly. Until then, please enjoy and use these masks and stickers. Feel free to let us know if you need more for your members. We look forward to seeing you 'virtually' around the Great River Region.

In Christ We Remain,

Rev. Dr. Nadine Burton
Executive Regional Minister