



Weekly Newsletter

Christmas Offering 2022

Taken from disciplesmissionfund.org.

Your Christmas offering equips our Region to echo the joy heard in summer camp settings, congregational life, seminary classrooms, and leadership gatherings. Your gift enables our Region to give support to Elders, Sunday School teachers, youth group sponsors, worship leaders, seminarians, and pastors so that joy resounds. With your gift, connections are made between congregations and among Disciples throughout this Region and around the world.



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- It's never too early to start planning to attend the 2023 General Assembly!
- Discover the meaning behind the symbolic ornaments of the Chrismon Tree.
- Join us December 14th for a special event that'll be sure to warm your soul!



2023 General Assembly Registration Now Open!

Taken from ga.disciples.org .

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada is excited to announce the 2023 General Assembly in Louisville, Kentucky, July 29—August 1! It will be the first time in four years the church as a whole has gathered.

Save the date to join Disciples across the church as we gather in person and digitally. Registration is open now!

The 2023 General Assembly Kingdom of God, Within Us, Among Us, is a call for Disciples to strengthen their relationship with God, both as individuals and as a part of God's community through an expansive gathering

of the church in Louisville. The past two years, we have had to be separated but we have also innovated new ways for God's limitless love to be revealed in our church, our communities, and around the world. God's limitless imagination holds so many possibilities for our church.

This four-day event will encourage Disciples who gather to celebrate the way that God's expansive love connects each of us as "kin" and to be part of the larger kingdom of God.

Registration is now open online at ga.disciples.org.

Feel free to contact the church office for assistance registering!

“...this survey...is extremely important and valued.” - PRRI Asks for Clergy to Participate in Survey



PRRI Asks for Clergy to Participate in Survey

Taken from disciples.org .

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is partnering with Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) and the Duke Endowment to conduct a major national study about the health and future flourishing of mainline Protestant clergy and churches. This current study comes at a crucial time, as churches are struggling with simultaneous challenges amid a volatile cultural context in the aftermath of COVID-19.

While this survey is voluntary, clergy participation in the survey is extremely important and valued. The results from the survey will be aggregated among the denominations under study and released in a national report in early 2023 and also will be made public and available for download on PRRI's website for use by researchers.

The link for the survey can be found [HERE](#). If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact PRRI at info@prri.org.

Chrismon Ornaments on the Chrismon Tree

Written by Rev. Tracy Siegman



Chrismons are the ornaments hung on the Chrismon tree during the Advent and Christmas season. The word comes from a contraction for 'Christ monograms' that remind us of the names and work of Jesus. Chrismons are gold and white handmade ornaments, representing majesty and purity. They were first developed by Frances Spencer and the women of the Ascension Lutheran Church in Danville, VA.

Below are some Chrismons and their meanings:

- ◆ **Alpha and Omega:** The first and the last letters of the Greek alphabet are used in this Chrismon to signify that Christ is the beginning and ending of all things. This is mentioned in the Bible in Revelation 1:8.
- ◆ **Anchor cross:** The anchor cross originated in ancient Egypt and was adapted by the early Christians in the catacombs.
- ◆ **Bell:** A bell is often used to call people to worship. This Chrismon symbolizes the sounding forth of God's word and serves as a reminder that God should have first priority in our lives.
- ◆ **Bible:** This Chrismon is a replica of an open Bible, which represents the word of God.
- ◆ **Budded cross:** The Budded Cross is symbolic of the young Christian who has just begun serving Christ. Like a bud, young believers are considered "immature Christians."
- ◆ **Burning torch:** This symbol reminds Christians to be witnesses for Christ.
- ◆ **Butterfly:** The butterfly is a symbol of Christ's resurrection and eternal life. Just as the butterfly emerges from its cocoon and flies upward with a new body, the followers of Jesus Christ are reborn and given a new life.
- ◆ **Cup:** The cup is a symbol of the blood Jesus shed on the cross for our sins. The cup also reminds us of the sacrament of Holy Communion.
- ◆ **Chi Rho:** The Chi Rho Chrismon is a monogram of the first two letters of the Greek word for Christ - Chi (X) and Rho (P).
- ◆ **Christmas rose:** The Christmas rose is a white, hardy rose that blooms at Christmastime. It is symbolic of the messianic prophecy and the nativity.
- ◆ **Circle and triangle:** This Chrismon combines a circle and a triangle to form an unique symbol of the eternity of the Trinity.

Why Give to the Christmas Offering?

Taken from
disciplesmissionfund.org

Our gifts support the work of regional ministries this Christmas. Your regional ministry works to:

- Connect congregations to each other
- Foster faith development
- Gather Disciples in camps, conferences, and assemblies
- Nurture the development of a new generation of pastors
- Assist churches in calling new ministers
- Interpret the global mission of the Church
- Represent the Church in ecumenical gatherings
- Counsel and pray with those who are troubled of spirit
- Lead the Church to address racism
- Inspire leaders to experiment and create
- Witness to the power of God to make things new

Chrismons Cont'd



- ♦ **Cross and crown:** The cross and crown symbolizes a Christian's reward in heaven for being a faithful servant while living on earth. See Revelation 2:10.
- ♦ **Cross pattee:** This form of the cross resembles a Maltese cross and is often used for decorative purposes.
- ♦ **Daisy:** Toward the end of the 15th century, the daisy became a popular symbol for the innocence of the Holy Child.
- ♦ **Dove:** The dove is a widely recognized symbol of purity and innocence. The dove also stands for the Holy Spirit, and is a reminder of the presence of God during the baptism of Jesus and hovering over the waters at creation.
- ♦ **Epiphany star:** This star represents the star of Jacob and the star that led the wise men to Jerusalem. See Numbers 24:17.
- ♦ **Fish:** The fish is a popular symbol of Christianity today. It was a secret symbol used by the early persecuted Christians to signify their belief in Jesus.
- ♦ **Fleur de lis:** This flower-like symbol represents the virgin Mary.
- ♦ **Harp:** The stringed harp is symbolic of music that praises God.
- ♦ **Lamb:** In the New Testament, Jesus is often referred to as "the sacrificial lamb."
- ♦ **Lamp:** The lamp stands for the word of God. See Psalm 119:105.
- ♦ **Manger:** The manger reminds us to be 6k humble, and represents the simplicity of the birth and life of Jesus.
- ♦ **Shamrock:** The three leaves of the shamrock, or clover, stands for the Trinity - Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
- ♦ **Shell with drops of water:** This Chrismon is symbolic of Jesus' baptism in the Jordan river by John the Baptist.
- ♦ **Trumpet:** The trumpet signifies a call to worship, the day of resurrection and the day of judgment.

Thank-You from Cane Ridge

Taken from a letter received from James H. Trader, II, Curator of The Cane Ridge Shrine, Inc.

On behalf of the board of trustees I want to thank you for your recent generous donation of \$100 to the Cane Ridge Shrine, Inc.

We closed the 2022 season with a worship service on October 31. Although small, the gathered congregation rejoiced in the ability to come together throughout the year for our

regular schedule of events.

2022 was a relative return to normal after two years of pandemic restrictions.

We are grateful for all the support we receive from visitors and friends like you from around the country and the world. We are honored to maintain and preserve the history of these grounds and we hope you will continue to support our efforts in the future.

SoulCare

WARMTH & WELLNESS



National
Benevolent
Association



Livestream Event
Wed., December 14, 2022
7:30 pm ET / 4:30 pm PT

[REGISTER NOW](#)

Watch Party: “SoulCare: Warmth & Wellness”

Taken from nbacares.org .

Join the National Benevolent Association’s Mental Health & Wellness Director, Joselyn Spence, along with other guests as we share a moment to pause, process, and care for ourselves this holiday season. We encourage you to grab your favorite mug, something soothing to sip, and a cozy chair as you prepare for an evening of SoulCare focused on wellness practices.

Want to share the moment? First Christian Church will be hosting a watch party during the event’s live-stream. Join us for refreshments (including hot chocolate and coffee), good discussion, and great company!

You can [register online](#) (free!) to participate from home, or come by the church on Wednesday, December 14th for the 7:30 PM live-stream. Either way you choose, we hope to see you there!

12 Days of Wellness—Mental Health Tips for the Holiday Season

Taken from nbacares.org .

The holiday season can be a tremendously stressful time for many individuals who are struggling with a mental illness such as depression and anxiety. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) reported that approximately 24 percent of people with a diagnosed mental illness find that the holidays make their condition “a lot” worse and 40 percent “somewhat” worse.”

To help with feelings of grief, depression, or anxiety you may be feeling this season, Joselyn Spence, Director of NBA’s Mental Health and Wellness program has recorded 12

tips that will help you get through this time of year with a bit more wellness in mind. Starting Monday, December 12th, watch one video per day so that we can help you navigate this Advent season and all that comes with it.

To view the videos, go to <https://www.nbacares.org/resources/12-days-of-wellness/> .

Prayer List

Please join us in prayer this week as we lift up the following persons and ask God to intervene in their lives to provide comfort and healing.

- ♦ Phyllis Mead
- ♦ Rose & Elton Gudvangen
- ♦ Imogene Walters
- ♦ Sandy Taylor
- ♦ Mubasherr Faheem
- ♦ Sue Gallenstein
- ♦ Joe Gallenstein
- ♦ Priscilla Hubbard
- ♦ Marie Lancaster
- ♦ Nancy Frakes
- ♦ Callie Jo Slattery

Recurring Events:

Sundays 10:45 AM

Morning Worship

Join us in-person or from home during our live stream!

Tuesdays 2:00 PM

Women's Bible Study

Join the weekly Zoom call for a prayer and Bible study session! Contact the church office for the Zoom link if interested.

Saturdays 5:00 PM

Community Dinner

We prepare and serve a community dinner weekly and always need volunteers! Contact the church office if you're interested!

Upcoming Events

- ⇒ **Sunday, December 11th** **After Worship (~11:30 AM)**
Congregational Meeting
The congregation will be asked to vote on the nominees for Leadership Council, Elders, Deacons, and other church leadership roles, affirm the continuation of the Leadership Council, and approve the 2023 ministry budget.
- ⇒ **Sunday, December 18th** **10:45 AM**
Lessons in Carols Worship Service
Join us as we worship and learn through the songs of the season.
- ⇒ **Wednesday, December 14th** **7:30 PM—8:30 PM**
Watch Party: "SoulCare: Warmth & Wellness"
Join the National Benevolent Association for a livestream event! Grab a hot beverage and get cozy as we offer warmth and wellness this holiday season. FCC will be hosting a watch party with refreshments and great company! [Register online](#) (free) to participate from home.

Thank you for reading this week's newsletter!

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- ⇒ **Saturday, December 24th** **5:30 PM**
Christmas Eve Community Dinner
We are hosting the community dinner on Christmas Eve. We will offer a big feast and presents for all our guests. We'll sing Christmas carols and have a visit from Santa! This is an all-hands on-deck project for all of us to offer a gift to the community as part of our Christmas Eve worship.
- ⇒ **Saturday, December 24th** **After Dinner (~7:00 PM)**
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
A family-friendly candlelight service. All are welcome!
- ⇒ **Sunday, December 25th** **10:45 AM**
Christmas Morning Pajama Party
You are invited to wear your Christmas pajamas to service! We'll sing lots of Christmas carols and enjoy some sweet treats.