



DHF Connection

FALL 2025

A Season for everything

Nancy and I moved to Texas a year and a half ago. We have already learned there are only two seasons here. There is hot and there is ridiculously hot! OK, that might be a slight exaggeration...

Shortly after we moved, Nancy and I entered a season of uncertainty. When her cancer returned, we faced decisions, travel, treatments, and more travel. It was a season causing us to draw closer to and rely more intentionally on God and his faithfulness. God sustained us and healed Nancy through the wonderful teams of medical specialists in Illinois and Texas. We are grateful that season is, for the most part, in the rearview mirror.

This has been a season of growth for DHF. We have seen many new churches enter the DHF orbit, and several choose to become DHF churches (see article on page 2 highlighting two of those churches). They seem to be drawn to this ministry as we stand for the inspiration and authority of the Bible, and that salvation is found only in Jesus Christ. I am regularly contacted by churches wanting help navigating today's spiritual confusion. I am grateful God has put DHF in a position to serve those churches.

**There is a time
for everything,
and a season
for every
activity under
the heavens**

ECCLSIASTES 3:1

Sunday, Sept. 7th. But even before their launch, 7 people were baptized into Christ. On their first Sunday, another professed Jesus as Lord and asked to be baptized. Your prayers and other expressions of support have helped make that all possible.

DHF has now entered a season of transition. A Transition Team was appointed to search for the next Executive Director.

The Team has collected resumes and has begun the interview process. Please pray for the Team and for the one God is calling to step into this leadership role. As with any transition, we can expect some bumps along the way, but our faithful God can be trusted to lead the way.

This also means Nancy and I are on the cusp of our next transition. I have loved serving as the Church Liaison for the past six years, but it is time for me to step back into a secondary role. John 3:30 has taken on new meaning: "He must become greater; I must become less." No one knows what "less" will look like but again, God is faithful. I am ready for whatever role he has in store for me.

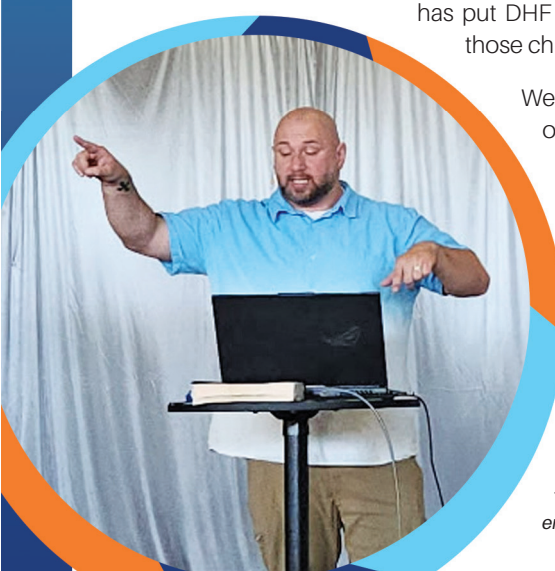
Seasons change, but our God does not. Let's lean into him as we enter this next season together. Email me (rgrace@discipleheritage.org) if you have questions or to explore how DHF can help empower you thrive in your next season!

Rick



Rick Grace | rgrace@discipleheritage.org

Rick is the DHF Church Liaison. He and his wife, Nancy, have served in pastoral ministry for more than 50 years. Rick earned his doctorate from the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary.



We've seen the launch of the first church planted as a DHF church. The Stone Christian Church (Clarksville, TN) officially launched

The Stone Christian Church in Clarksville, TN officially launched Sunday, September 7, 2025. (at top) Congregants engage in worship. (at left) Pastor Sam Sears preaches during The Stone's launch worship service.

Welcome to the family!

We are excited to introduce you to two of the newest DHF churches:

First Christian Church Princeton, West Virginia

After a time of prayer and discernment, the congregation of First Christian Church in Princeton, West Virginia voted unanimously on Sunday, September 14, 2025 to become an official DHF church. The church had withdrawn from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) over a year ago. They wanted to take some time and discern what the next steps should be for their church family. In the end, they decided connecting with DHF was the way to go. The church was founded in 1907 and has faithfully served the Lord and the Princeton community for more than 100 years. The current sanctuary was dedicated in 1951. The Lord opened a door for the church to develop a unique partnership with Mupumbu, Zimbabwe. They built a building with a seating capacity of 200 for an African church that is using it to reach out to the neighboring villages. We look forward to a long and mutually beneficial relationship with First Christian Church in Princeton, WV. Please pray for Pastor Steve & Teresa Janning as well as



Arthur Christian Church Bell Arthur, North Carolina

On Sunday, September 14, 2025, the congregation of Arthur Christian Church, Bell Arthur, North Carolina voted unanimously to become a DHF church. Their path to this decision was a little different. They have been an independent congregation for several years after leaving the Disciples of Christ. However, at the encouragement of church leadership, the congregation voted to become part of a network of like-minded churches in DHF. Arthur Christian Church was founded in 1907. The church pulls a trailer out into the community and serves free coffee and donuts while offering to pray for those who receive the snacks. The church is in a season of growth — both spiritually and physically — as they will be breaking ground on a 17,000 square foot edition in early November. The church is served by Pastor DJ Maxey who is approaching his first anniversary with the church. Pray for Pastor DJ & Dee Dee and Arthur Christian Church as they seek the Lord and continue to serve him in their community.



We welcome both church families to the growing DHF network!



Flora First Christian Church

FLORA, INDIANA



WHERE DO WE START?

BY TOM AND KATHIE HELVIE

Flora First Christian Church (Flora, IN) was searching for what was next as we became dissatisfied with the Disciples of Christ in 2017. After the death of our pastor, we searched for an interim, but the denomination didn't have anyone to offer so they sent Sunday morning pulpit supply. But our deeper dissatisfaction was that we didn't feel that the Disciples represented our church, our biblical beliefs, or what Christ taught.

One of our Elders heard about Disciple Heritage Fellowship. To learn more, six of our elders attended a meeting in Decatur, IL. We were anxious but were given the warmest greetings we could have received. We heard the Bible being read and messages being spoken, and we immediately knew we were among fellow believers who were hungry to hear the Bible come alive.

We've attended the DHF conference every year since. Our friendships have grown as does the worship experience. Our faith has deepened, and our commitment to the Lord has strengthened as we return to our church family.

The conference is just a small part of what Disciple Heritage Fellowship has to offer, as we were shown recently when everything we thought was going so well our church fell apart. Where do we turn?

That was the question we faced in May 2025. Due to unforeseen circumstances, our beloved pastor concluded

he could no longer continue as our pastor. The confusion, hurt, and damage done to our church, our new childcare center, and to members of the congregation was beyond belief.

We turned to our friends in DHF for their guidance, care, and prayers, and we were met with grace and understanding. In the many conversations held with Dr. Rick Grace and Dr. Ellen Moma, the prayers and encouragements were felt deeply. Through their care, help, and guidance, the Lord took us to a better place.

Ellen filled our pulpit and led a question-and-answer session with the Elders and the congregation. Her presence encouraged us and helped us see we could move past this event. We knew DHF would continue to help in any way it could. Pastor Steven Sorensen was enlisted to fill our pulpit for 7 weeks. Pastor David Upchurch, a friend through our association with DHF, spent a weekend with our church leadership team and preached Sunday. Pastor Mike Doak is now our full-time intentional interim.

All this came together due to the family we have in DHF. If you wonder what DHF does for churches that have joined this fellowship, we can tell you they are invaluable! The friendships made at the yearly conferences have now turned into a stream of prayers. Their encouragement will be forever remembered.



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Support the Ministry of DHF

God has richly blessed DHF throughout 2025. Among the highlights are:

- We added four new churches to our growing network.
- Our pastor's network has grown to more than 175 pastors
- We continue to host eight online study/networking opportunities for pastors.
- DHF 2025 had nearly 200 registrants making it our largest conference in many years.
- The DHF Elder Forum continues to address needs we hear from lay leaders and churches around the country.
- And our transition team is prayerfully considering the next Executive Director to lead DHF into the future.

As you plan for your year-end giving, please consider a gift to DHF so we end the year strong and expand our ministry in 2026. Thank you for supporting the ministry of DHF!



Thank you
for your gifts!

