



Disciple Heritage Fellowship

3350 N MacArthur Rd / Decatur, IL 62526 / 217.875.3350

f @discipleheritage.org

DHF Staff

Rick Grace
CHURCH LIAISON
rgrace@discipleheritage.org

FCC Decatur

Brian Talty
LEAD PASTOR

Jonathan Grunden
EXECUTIVE PASTOR

Crystal Kirkman
COMMUNICATIONS

Dawn Wendt
OFFICE

DHF Board

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CELEBRATING **40** YEARS OF DHF

DISCIPLE HERITAGE FELLOWSHIP NATIONAL CONFERENCE

DHF'25

May 7-8, 2025
Decatur, IL

Featuring Cam & Sarah Huxford

DETAILS & REGISTRATION



DETAILS & REGISTRATION AT
discipleheritage.org



We empower churches and pastors to thrive and fulfill the Great Commission

DHF has operated under this mission statement for several years: *The mission of DHF is to encourage, strengthen and lead churches to fulfill Christ's mission.* While it was not an agenda item at our recent strategic planning retreat, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit in cooperation with the leadership team from Intentional Churches, we sensed the Lord directing us to adopt this new mission statement: **We empower churches and pastors to thrive and fulfill the Great Commission.**

This is not so much a new direction as it is a more sharpened focus. God has used DHF to empower churches, often enabling them to move from a place of feeling stuck, where they no longer seemed to fit. That is why we have seen the DHF network of churches expand. But it is one thing to empower churches to move **from** and another to help them move **toward** and refocus on the Great Commission.

We have also helped pastors move from feeling disconnected and alone to a place of connection and community. One of my joys at our DHF national conferences is to watch the faces of pastors who have been in a virtual community light up when they meet for the first time. We hear after every conference, "I am still in ministry because of DHF." The next step is to help pastors thrive in recapturing a Great Commission lens.

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations..."

MATTHEW 28:18-19a

You will hear more about our partnership with Intentional Churches in the months ahead. One of the breakout sessions at our 2025 DHF National Conference will be an introduction to the ministry of Intentional Churches. Other breakouts include:

- ▶ Opportunities for Growth Between Pastors
- ▶ A Live DHF Elder Forum
- ▶ Raising up the Next Generation of Leaders
- ▶ The Church on Mission (best days ahead)
- ▶ Know When to Stay, Know When to Go
- ▶ Tax Tips for Pastors

We are excited to have Pastor Cam and Sarah Huxford with us. They will share in several main sessions. They bring a wealth of experience to us, having served Compassion Christian Church (Savannah, Georgia) for 40 years.

The Worship Arts team of the First Christian Church Decatur, IL will again lead in worship throughout the conference. Worshiping with believers from around the country, lifting hearts, hands, and voices to the One who alone is worthy is truly incredible.

DHF '25 promises to be a special experience as we mark our 40th anniversary. Register today at discipleheritage.org/conference. Let us know how DHF can help empower your church to thrive and fulfill the Great Commission!

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.

Top: DHF Board Members and FCC Decatur IL staff spent two days with coaches from Intentional Churches at Westside Christian Church in Springfield, IL in February 2025; Left: IC Coach Melissa Sandel speaks to the DHF Board

Fremont Christian Church

FREMONT, MICHIGAN

DHF'25

WHY SHOULD YOU GO TO THE DHF NATIONAL CONFERENCE?

WOW! What an amazing first glimpse of Disciple Heritage Fellowship! In 2024, my husband, Paul, and I attended our first DHF Conference. We weren't sure what to expect after years of attending Assemblies in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) that focused on social and political issues. I always left those gatherings feeling drained and wondering where all this was leading. I was told ahead of time the DHF conference would not be that, so I was hopeful for the first time in a long time. It did not disappoint!

When we entered First Christian Church Decatur, IL, we noticed the exhibitor tables were all about missions and resources to help churches in their ministry. Each one aligned with our theological viewpoints. That was a breath of fresh air! We made our way to the sanctuary and there we heard the beautiful sounds of praise and worship music. What a treat it was to just soak in the presence of God.

The keynote speakers were phenomenal as they focused, not on pushing an agenda, but on feeding those in attendance who faithfully and tirelessly serve Christ and the Church with scripture and helpful things to think about. The breakout session leaders gave inspirational presentations that were also

grounded in scripture. They asked what they could do to help us better serve our congregations rather than pushing their product or agenda on us. Again... a breath of fresh air!

When we came to the conference, we only knew a handful of people, but we left with many new friends. It was nice to engage with people who were like-minded, who shared many of the same values, and with whom we are theologically aligned. Before the end of the conference, I had been invited to join a clergy study group. This group has been invaluable to me throughout the year as we studied and prayed together. I can't wait to see all these new friends at this year's conference.

My husband and I can hardly wait for May 7-8, 2025, to arrive. We are looking forward to all the ways God will work in and through this conference! We feel so blessed to be part of Disciple Heritage Fellowship. You are not going to want to miss this! We hope to see you there!

Rev. Shannon Grubbs

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH UNITED, LEWISVILLE, TEXAS



On Sunday, April 21, 2024, the congregation of Fremont Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) voted unanimously to sever our relationship with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). This decision was not taken lightly. A committee had been working on this for more than a year.

What brought us to this point?

Our congregation is very independent but not afraid to ask for help. Over the years, we have taken advantage of many services from the DoC, like a mortgage, financial campaign, and savings certificates. Because we are independent-minded, we have not kept up on the DoC General Assembly motions. It was not until we started looking for a new pastor three years ago that we sensed something was not "right." The pastoral search committee received many resumes from the Region and found a disturbing pattern. The resumes and conversations with some of the pastors did not seem to fit who we were.

So, we began to look in more detail and at what the Disciples of Christ now stood for. We reviewed the General Assembly motions over the years and were shocked to find the changes made to the direction of the DoC did not fit who we were.

The areas of our church's focus became:

Disciples' stance on salvation. The Bible tells us that Jesus is the only way to salvation. "Jesus answered, 'I am

the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me'" (John 14:6).

Disciples' stance on the authority of the Bible. The Bible tells us that "all Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16).

Disciples' stance on sexual orientation & gender. The Bible tells us, "Do not have sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman; that is detestable" (Leviticus 18:22). We are told not to follow the culture around us but to follow God's word.

The committee held many information sessions for the congregation. Then on April 21, 2024, the congregation voted unanimously to approve the separation from the Disciples of Christ. Then on July 28, 2024 we had a congregational meeting to affirm our new name, "Fremont Christian Church," approve a new constitution and bylaws, and finally to approve affiliation with the Disciple Heritage Fellowship.

We look forward to a long and mutually beneficial relationship with DHF.

Randy Puff & Dr. Stephen Jumper

ELDER & PASTOR OF FREMONT CHRISTIAN CHURCH, FREMONT, MICHIGAN

Top left: A time of worship during DHF'24, top right: One of many breakout sessions during DHF'24, bottom: Paul Grubbs, Shannon Grubbs, Nancy Grace, & Rick Grace

Pictured above: Fremont Christian Church's facilities
Upper right: Dr. Stephen Jumper (pastor)