



COME *Home* TO THE RESTORATION MOVEMENT

It surprised me the first time I read through the NIV 2011 version of the Bible. There in II Corinthians I found a word—restoration—that has become very important to me. Let me explain.

I grew up attending First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Princeton, IL. I was aware our church had distinctives like baptism by immersion and weekly communion but had no idea why. Those practices were simply accepted but not explained.

In college, I joined a campus ministry supported by “independent” Christian churches. I knew even less about these Christian church cousins. Our campus pastor asked what kind of Christian church I had attended. He could tell by my blank stare I had no clue how to answer!

I muttered something about “a communion cup with a cross on its side” on our sign. He smiled and said it was a Disciples of Christ church. All I knew was I appreciated my home church, and especially my high school youth coach. Glen loved Jesus, kids, and the Bible.

Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

2 CORINTHIANS 13:11

Early slogans of the Restoration Movement became important to me. **“No book but the Bible; no Creed but the Christ”** speaks to embracing the authority and infallibility of the Bible (II Tim. 3:16-17) and holding to the belief Jesus is the world’s only Savior (John 14:6, Acts 4:12).

“In essentials unity; in opinions liberty; in all things love,” points to an irreducible core set of beliefs on which we cannot compromise (Ephesians 4:4-6), while freedom of opinion is extended on matters not directly addressed in the Bible. We operate from a posture of love (John 13:35), agreeing to disagree without being disagreeable.

Over the years, I watched my church of origin drift, then rush head-long, to the theological left. The Disciples are now one of our country’s most progressive denominations. While I was raised in a Christian church, I chose to remain committed to the ideals of the Restoration Movement.

If, like me, you want to stay rooted in what the Restoration Movement stands for, then explore DHF. As part of that exploration, consider joining us for our 2024 DHF National Conference in Decatur, IL on April 24-25. Find out more at **firstdecatur.org/conference**. Together, let’s “strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, [and] live in peace,” to the glory of God!

Rick



Rick Grace | rgrace@discipleheritage.org

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



In seminary, I learned about the Restoration Movement, also known as the Campbell-Stone movement.

These two streams of spiritual renewal met in Lexington, KY in 1831 to join forces to restore New Testament beliefs and practices.

Top: Rick Grace & Nancy Grace met with Mark & Carolyn Carpenter of First Christian Church in Palmyra, MO
Left: Rick & Nancy Grace at Solid Rock Chapel in Sullivan, IL

DHF '24

DISCIPLE HERITAGE FELLOWSHIP NATIONAL CONFERENCE April 24-25, 2024 in Decatur, IL

We have often been asked, "What can we expect at the 2024 DHH National Conference?" What a great question! Here are some things you can expect at our national conference.

You can expect to worship Jesus. We will be led by the First Christian Church Worship Arts team of Decatur, IL. Each day will begin with a time of worship, with a few other worship times sprinkled in.

You can expect to grow and be encouraged and challenged by the Word of God. This year, we will have five main session speakers. They are:



DR. RICK GRACE has been in pastoral ministry for almost 50 years, serving the last 4+ years as the DHF Church Liaison. In that role, he has visited churches all over the country to preach, teach and consult. His heart is to "pastor pastors."



PASTOR KIM HOLLEY has served as the Lead Pastor of the La Grange, NC First Christian Church since August 2020. She is a member of the DHF Board and our previous board president. She also chairs the DHF of North Carolina Board.



PASTOR NATHAN LOEWEN is the Lead Pastor of First Christian Church of the Beaches in Neptune, Beach, FL. He has served in that role since 2016. FCCB is one of the newest DHF churches and Nathan joined the DHF Board in January 2024.



WILL PARTON is President of GO Ministries. GO's focus is to empower local leaders to make disciples and renew communities. The organization facilitates mission experiences for students, adults, and families in the Dominican Republic.



PASTOR MICHAEL TEN EYCK is the Lead Pastor of First Christian Church in Pittsfield, IL, where he has served for almost 20 years. He has been involved with DHF for almost that long, having served on the DHF Board, with two terms as board president.

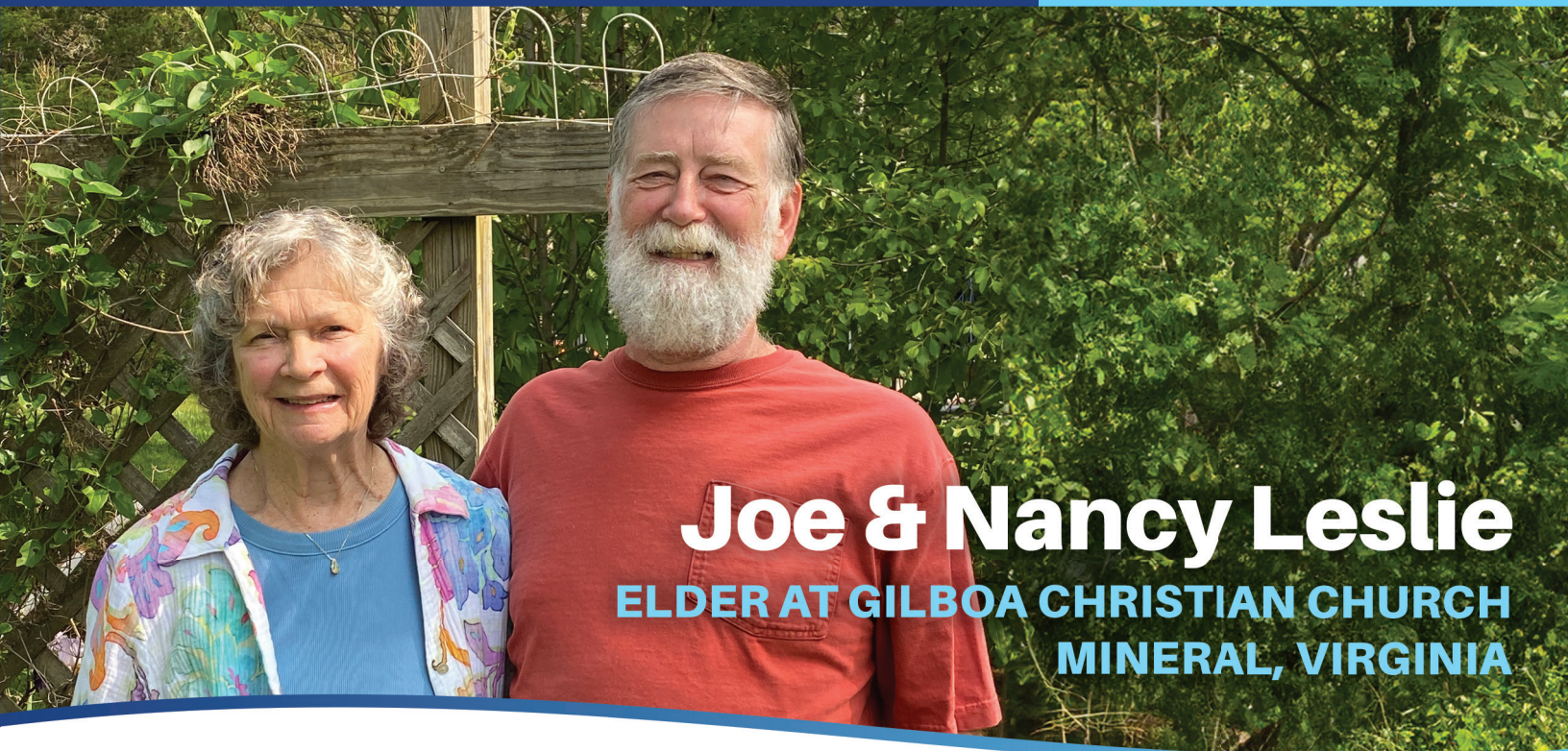
DHF '24 also will feature quality breakout sessions. Several of our sponsors will lead workshops. Topics may include Pastor & Elder relationships, Caring for Your Volunteers, Worship Planning, Women in Ministry, Tax Savings for Pastors, and Stewardship Insight for Church Leaders.

You can expect to network with other church leaders from around the country throughout the conference, but especially at dinner on Wednesday night (which is included in your registration). The goal is to connect you with people from your area of the country to foster relationships that can be developed once you are back home.

DHF '24 has been designed with you in mind. It is one of the best ways DHF can "strengthen, encourage and lead churches to fulfill Christ's mission." Hope to see you there!

For more info, go to discipleheritage.org/conference





Joe & Nancy Leslie

ELDER AT GILBOA CHRISTIAN CHURCH MINERAL, VIRGINIA

Last year, our pastor and I attended the 2023 DHF National Conference. It was my first time attending a church conference of any type, although I did listen to the 2020 DHF National Conference via Zoom while driving to Kansas.

Our church severed ties with the Disciples of Christ in 1997 and has since operated as an independent church. In 2021, during a pastoral search, we realized the advantages of being associated with a larger group. In 2022, we joined with DHF, raising funds to assist Ukrainian refugees. We even joined Pastor Wayne Kent and other incredible DHF members to visit those refugees in Poland. After that experience and numerous talks with Rick Grace, I attended DHF '23. Our pastor was from a Baptist background, and we believed it would be good exposure to the Restoration Movement.

I grew up in a non-instrumental Church of Christ. A vital doctrine was that each church is independent and under the leadership of the local elders. These elders followed the Stone-Campbell emphasis of the first century church. Although I appreciate this doctrine, as an Elder in a small rural church, it has become important for me to commune with other like-minded people to discuss issues and learn from them.

The 2023 conference was great. My spirit was reinvigorated through the speakers, the breakout sessions, and the exhibitors. I learned new ideas to bring others to the Lord, resources, and partnering opportunities to help spread the Gospel. It was refreshing to talk with people who might not worship the same way as my church but love the Lord and want to serve Him — all while sharing what has and has not worked in the ministry.

The concept of DHF is what I most appreciate. This is a fellowship of churches coming together to encourage and support one another (1 Thessalonians 5:11). It is not a denomination requiring adherence to a specific doctrine. While we may not agree on all issues, DHF desires to bring us together as the family of God (Ephesians 4:15-16). I am reminded of a quote often attributed to St. Augustine, Alexander Campbell was partial to: "In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; but in all things, charity."

It is so easy to get stuck in the rut of "this is how we have always done it," especially in a small rural church without much interaction with other like-minded believers. The DHF conference was a great way to get ideas as well as being able to help others by exchanging ideas and experiences.

I will be back and hopefully bringing our new pastor. I encourage anyone wanting to learn more about DHF and to grow closer to the Lord to attend DHF '24!

Joe Leslie





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Our **Monday Morning Encouragement** emails are sent weekly with an inspirational devotion, prayer requests, podcast releases, DHF updates, and more!



DHF'24

April 24-25, 2024



It's time to register for the 2024 DHF National Conference! Find out more in this issue of the DHF Connection newsletter. For details & registration, scan the QR code above or visit discipleheritage.org/conference