



They Devoted Themselves

I am excited! And I am getting even more excited with each passing day and with each new registration for DHF '23, set for April 26-27 in Decatur, IL. The phrase that keeps tumbling around in my mind is from [Acts 2](#), where Luke wrote of the early church, "[they devoted themselves](#)" to five specific disciplines. Each will be highlighted at DHF '23.

They devoted themselves to the [apostles' teaching \(v. 42\)](#). Our main session teachers will be Rick Rusaw (Spire Network), Brian Talty (Decatur, IL FCC), Kim Holley (La Grange, NC FCC) and Rick Grace (DHF). Teaching in our breakout sessions will be Jim Estep (Lincoln Christian University), BJ Leonard (Decatur, IL FCC), Scott McNay (La Plata, MO FCC), Drew McClellan (Port Arthur, TX FCC), and Jerod Walker (Christian Financial Resources). Quite a lineup of presenters!

They devoted themselves [to fellowship \(v. 42\)](#). DHF '23 will be a great time for meeting old friends and making new ones, for making network connections that will pay kingdom dividends. Instead of our "Dinners for Eight," we are having a meal catered at Decatur First on Wednesday night where you will be free to network as much as you can. For as spread out as our DHF churches are, we want to be intentional in creating networking opportunities.

They devoted themselves [to the breaking of bread \(v.42\)](#). This has been understood

within the Restoration Movement as the celebration of the Lord's Supper. We will celebrate the meal Jesus infused with new meaning in our last plenary session of DHF '23.

They devoted themselves [to prayer \(v. 42\)](#). An addition for DHF '23 will be a dedicated prayer room. It will be available during the conference if you need to step away from things and spend time with the Lord. At times, there will be people in the prayer room who will either pray for you or with you, depending on your desire. We want to be a people of prayer, and this is step in making that a reality.

They devoted themselves [to praise \(v. 47\)](#). We will be led in worship throughout DHF '23 by the Decatur First Christian Worship Arts team. They will help give voice to the worship of God that naturally arises when God's people come together to learn about and celebrate Jesus. As one of our "senior saints" who attended DHF '22 reflected, "I normally don't like praise and worship music, but I couldn't keep from tapping my foot and joining in!"

I hope you see why I am excited for DHF '23. Registration and conference details (including hotel information) can be found at [discipleheritage.org/conference](#). Hotel reservations must be made by April 4th to receive the discounted rate. We are looking forward to seeing you at DHF '23!

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 45 years. Rick earned his doctorate from the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary.



Left: Rick Grace leads a main session during the 2022 DHF National Conference

5 Reasons Why You Should Attend DHF'23

DHF'23 is quickly approaching. And you should make plans now to attend.

Yeah, I know. You have fifty thousand other things you could be doing during those two days (more like three to four days when you count travel time). You also have a billion other things to spend your registration and travel money on. I get it. You're busy. You have a family. You have bills. What if you are needed while you are away? And for pastors, that sermon isn't going to write itself.

But...

I bet there are other things you allow to interfere with sermon writing time or cause you to rearrange your schedule or budget. So, to help you understand why this one thing is worth the sacrifice, schedule rearranging, and money spent, I'll share my top 5 reasons to attend DHF'23:

1 Connect with pastors and church leaders from around the country. These men and women understand or, at least, empathize with your plight, fight, and joy. They know what it's like to stand in the pulpit on Sunday mornings or to be on a Pulpit Search Committee. They can become friends who walk with you.

2 Learn new ideas for your ministry and congregation. From the main speakers to the breakout sessions, everything in DHF'23 is designed to help you and help you help others. I was once told "there's nothing new in ministry" because everything

is either revamped, repackaged, or "borrowed" from another church. This is your chance to "borrow" from those who have been revamping and repackaging for years. And, you may find something NEW after all.

3 Learn more about DHF. Dig deeper into the history, vision, and purpose of DHF; put faces with names in the newsletters and website, Facebook, and Instagram. Take the opportunity to talk to DHF board members and ask questions.

4 Relax, refresh, and renew. Life and ministry can be crazy. You give to others in many ways plus take care of your own family. You need time for yourself. Worship in a sanctuary without the stress of leadership and allow the Word of God to fill you.

5 And last but not least... it's an opportunity to **hear me speak!** Okay, that's not a real reason to attend DHF '23. But since we all need to laugh more, I hope you belly-laughed at this.

I pray you make the trip to Decatur, IL for DHF'23. I promise you won't be sorry.



Kim Holley

Kim is the DHF Board Chairperson. She is the pastor of La Grange Christian Church in La Grange, NC. Kim earned her master's degree from Campbell University Divinity School.



First Christian Church

ALLIANCE, OHIO



We are pleased to feature First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Alliance, Ohio, a recent addition to our growing DHF family of churches.

The church was founded in 1857 with 30 charter members. Though four different buildings have housed Alliance FCC, the mission of the church has remained the same – to lift up Jesus in their community. The current building (pictured) was dedicated in 2004, and the newest addition to the church completed in 2012. Pastor Mike Doak has served the church since 2019.

Throughout its history, it has been important to Alliance FCC to be the visible presence of Christ in the community. They serve their community through such things as the Alliance Community food pantry, Michael's World (a children's clothing ministry founded by the church), as well as providing two meals monthly in the downtown area.

The church also participates with Habitat for Humanity in various building projects. For the children of the community, Alliance FCC hosts an annual community Easter egg hunt, and a Halloween ministry where Bible characters in costume

tell Bible stories to the children and their families through a guided prayer walk.

Alliance FCC has recently discovered and connected with DHF. In explaining the decision behind the connection, one of the elders, Mort DeHoff said, "DHF has provided First Christian Church in Alliance an opportunity to reaffirm that we are a congregation that finds great value in the Stone-Campbell traditions. While we are a congregation that has a long history as part of the Disciples of Christ, we are questioning the current directions and decisions of the denominational leadership, many of which we cannot accept."

"Our DHF connection allows us to make a statement that we are a congregation that still believes in the authority of the Bible and that there is salvation only in Jesus. We were encouraged when we found a network of other churches who believe what we believe. We look forward to a long and growing relationship."

Welcome, Alliance First Christian Church, to the DHF network of churches. We look forward to serving our Lord with you for years to come.



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DHF 23

DISCIPLE HERITAGE FELLOWSHIP
NATIONAL CONFERENCE
APRIL 26-27, 2023 IN DECATUR, IL



You're invited!

Join us for our annual DHF National Conference April 26-27, 2023. It's a great time to learn, be encouraged, and connect with old friends as well as make new ones. Bring your entire leadership team with you... staff, elders, deacons, and volunteers. We have an amazing line up of main speakers as well as breakout sessions on evangelism, intergenerational ministry, missions, and more.

Registration

Registration for the DHF National Conference is \$99/person or \$149/married couple. Visit discipleheritage.org/conference (or scan the QR code) for details, registration, and hotel and travel information. Questions? Call 217.875.3350 or email Rick at rgrace@discipleheritage.org.



SCAN FOR DETAILS