



August September October | 2nd & 4th Thursdays, 7-8 pm

UPGRADE THURSDAYS*

2022

*A creative virtual experience to inform, inspire, and encourage the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Georgia

UPGRADE THURSDAYS

Upgrade Thursdays is a creative experience using a virtual platform to inform, inspire, and encourage the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Georgia family. Drawing from expertise throughout our region and denomination, presenters will offer an hour-long, Assembly-style workshop on the second and fourth Thursdays during January, February, and March to Disciples across Georgia. After a break for Easter and summer, we'll return to programming in August, September, and October. Whether you're a church member, lay leader, or clergy, you will find multiple opportunities to join in the ways God is leading us in our region-wide LIFT mission to be Loving, Impactful, Faithful, and Transforming leaders and communities of faith. Please use the ZOOM link below for the duration of the program – copy it into your calendar and watch for newsletter and FaceBook reminders.

Time: 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82313928170?pwd=WWVqaEJhUzI0d0ZmMFo2YWtmWE9UQT09>

Meeting ID: 823 1392 8170

Passcode: 121289

One tap mobile

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US (Chicago)

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US (New York)

Dial by your location

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

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Meeting ID: 823 1392 8170

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Find your local number

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kcLrn4OLkD>

SCHEDULE

08.11



**INSPIRITUS & GEORGIA
DISCIPLES REFUGEE TEAM**
Welcoming Refugees: It's a
Journey Not a Destination

08.25



**REV. DEBI ACREE &
REV. DR. DIANE BALES**
Child Abuse: The ABCs
of Prevention

09.08



GEORGIA DISCIPLES CLERGY
What's Next?
The Future of the Church –
and the Church of the Future

09.22



**REV. DR. MARY DONOVAN
TURNER**
Sacred Storytelling

10.13



GEORGIA DISCIPLES CLERGY
Innovative Ministry:
Change is Your Friend

10.27



REV. OLIVIA BRYAN UPDEGROVE
Intentional Intergenerational
Christian Faith

INSPIRITUS & GEORGIA DISCIPLES REFUGEE TEAM / 08.11

Welcoming Refugees: It's a Journey Not a Destination

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has a long history of welcoming refugees. In the past year, Georgia Disciples have joined in this work by welcoming Afghan refugees who fled their home country in August 2021. Since then, a group of metro Atlanta Disciples from several churches have been working in teams to help resettle Afghan families. In this program you will hear directly from some of these volunteers about the joys and the challenges of this work, and some advice for congregations who are interested in the biblical call to “welcome the stranger.” We also will welcome a representative from Inspiritus, the metro Atlanta refugee agency that is coordinating our work. *Speakers will include representatives from Inspiritus, as well as from Brookhaven Christian Church, Chestnut Ridge Christian Church in Marietta, and First Christian Church of Decatur.*

REV. DEBI ACREE & REV. DR. DIANE BALES / 08.25

Child Abuse: The ABCs of Prevention

In this workshop, Rev. Debi Acree and Rev. Dr. Diane Bales will share important resources and information, including signs of abuse, who are mandatory reporters, and ways churches can create safer environments. This is an essential workshop for those who work with children. *Rev. Debi Acree has spent much of her career working on issues affecting women and children, including serving as a Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Counselor, Advocate, and Director. Rev. Dr. Diane Bales is a Professor in Human Development and Family Science at the University of Georgia, Youth and Families Minister at FCC Lawrenceville, and Campus Minister for UGA Disciples on Campus.*

GEORGIA DISCIPLES CLERGY PANEL / 09.08

What's Next? The Future of the Church – and the Church of the Future

The past two-plus years have posed tremendous challenges and change in the life of our churches. Many churches have adopted new strategies for being the church that are here to stay. In this panel discussion led by five pastors from across the Christian Church in Georgia, we will explore these questions: 1) What is working at my church? 2) What is the best idea we've implemented in recent years? and 3) What is God calling the church to be and do as we look ahead to the future? *Panel discussion will be led by Rev. Dr. Nathan Brown, Senior Pastor of Sandy Springs Christian Church; Rev. Cheryl Cloar, Pastor of First Christian Church, Winder; Rev. Dr. Cynthia Hale, Founder and Senior Pastor of Ray of Hope Christian Church, Decatur; Rev. Joel Tucker, Senior Pastor of Guyton Christian Church; and Rev. Richard Williams, Senior Pastor of First Christian Church, Lawrenceville.*

REV. DR. MARY DONOVAN TURNER / 09.22

Sacred Storytelling

The Old and New Testaments begin with storytelling. In Genesis, after the world is created, and then destroyed, we embark on the story of some of the earliest ancestors of our faith – Sarah and Abraham, and the generations that follow. In the New Testament, we read extended stories about Jesus. In this workshop, Rev. Dr. Mary Donovan Turner, a retired professor of preaching, will explore questions such as: What makes story such a powerful vehicle for relating the sacred? Are all stories sacred – either because of their content or because of where and when we tell them? How are the stories important in our pastoral care and missional/ prophetic ministries? What are some of the dangers of storytelling in the church and in our preaching? *Rev. Dr. Mary Donovan Turner is a retired Professor of Preaching and Dean of the Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, CA. She is the author of Saved From Silence: Finding Women's Voice in Preaching; Old Testament Words; and The God We Seek. She also has lived and worked in Georgia, receiving her PhD in Old Testament Studies from Emory University, and serving as pastor in Brooks, GA and interim pastor in Warner Robins.*

GEORGIA DISCIPLES CLERGY PANEL / 10.13

Innovative Ministry: Change is Your Friend

Even as existing churches undergo transformation, new Disciples churches are being planted right here in Georgia. In this workshop, three Disciples pastors will give us an update about new church plants in Georgia: The Table, a renamed and rebranded Disciples congregation in Warner Robins; AMPLIFY Christian Church, serving the Southeast Gwinnett corridor; and Story Forest Christian Church, nesting in First Christian Church, Lawrenceville. Each of these churches has a distinct message and ministry that will inspire you in your own congregation to reach others with the message and ministry of Jesus Christ. *Pastor Chris Carter is the senior pastor of The Table, Rev. Orlando Scott is the senior pastor of AMPLIFY Christian Church, and Rev. Peter (Seokil) Yoon is the pastor of Story Forest Christian Church.*

REV. DR. OLIVIA BRYAN UPDEGROVE / 10.27

Intentional Intergenerational Christian Faith

Where are the families? Youth? Kids? Young Adults? The changes and challenges the church has faced since 2020 have brought even more urgency to the questions of faith and ministry. Effective answers to these questions are being discovered and shared through intentional intergenerational faith-sharing practices and programs. The discussion will be led by a special guest from our Disciples Home Missions, Rev. Dr. Olivia Bryan Updegrave. *Rev. Dr. Olivia Bryan Updegrave serves as part-time Minister for Ministries Across Generations for Disciples Home Missions and part-time pastor at a small church in northern Kentucky.*