



January February March | 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> 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)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

Meeting ID: 823 1392 8170

Passcode: 121289

Find your local number

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

# SCHEDULE

01.13



**REV. DR. SHARON STANLEY-REA**  
Refugee & Immigration Ministries: An Update

01.27



**REV. DR. CHRISTINA HICKS**  
Self-Care for Clergy & Caring Professionals

02.10



**REV. ELIZABETH HAGAN**  
Brave Church: Tackling Tough Conversations with Your Congregation

02.24



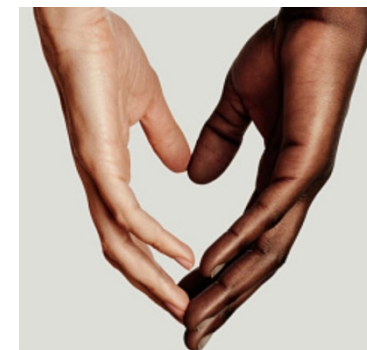
**DR. STANLEY SAUNDERS**  
Restorative Justice as Christian Practice

03.10



**REV. DR. GLORIA McCALL**  
Understanding Ministry TO Children

03.24



**RECONCILIATION COMMISSION**  
Reconciliation Town Hall: The Conversation Continues

## REV. DR. SHARON STANLEY-REA / 01.13

### Refugees & Immigration Ministries: An Update for Disciples

Did you know that the history of Disciples welcoming refugees and supporting immigrants goes back to at least 1949? Since that year, the Disciples' Refugee & Immigration Ministries (RIM) has settled 37,500 refugees and assisted farm workers and countless families facing immigration challenges. In this workshop, we will extend our welcome to Rev. Sharon Stanley-Rea as she updates us on immigration and refugee issues around the globe that impact the US, with a particular focus on current concerns, including the Afghan refugees that Georgia Disciples are helping to resettle. *Rev. Dr. Sharon Stanley-Rea is the Director of Refugee & Immigration Ministries for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).*

## REV. DR. CHRISTINA HICKS / 01.27

### Self-Care for Clergy & Caring Professionals

In the busyness of virtual-church, work, family, friendships, and a global pandemic, this workshop will address how clergy and others in caring professions can develop strategies and skills for self-care. We will explore some of the struggles and challenges that are prevalent to those in helping professions. *Rev. Dr. Christina Hicks, LMFT, is a licensed marriage and family therapist and pastoral counselor who works in private practice at New Horizons Counseling Center in Marietta, GA.*

**REV. ELIZABETH HAGAN / 02.10**

**Brave Church: Tackling Tough Conversations with Your Congregation**

We've all heard the advice, "Let's just agree to disagree." Or another comment, "Just be quiet if you have a divisive opinion." In times like these, God is calling the church to speak up, be brave, and have tough conversations. Lives of the most vulnerable in our communities depend on our speaking up. Come explore how to begin and lead difficult conversations with intentionality on topics such as racism, sexuality, mental illness, infertility, domestic violence, and more. *Rev. Elizabeth Hagan is the Interim Senior Pastor of First Christian Church in Athens and the author of Brave Church: Tackling Tough Topics Together.*

**DR. STANLEY SAUNDERS / 02.24**

**Restorative Justice as Christian Practice**

The American system of justice focuses on punishing wrongdoers (retributive justice) rather than on healing and restoring both victims and offenders and their communities (restorative justice). This session introduces the principles and practices that distinguish restorative justice, which has deep biblical roots, from retributive justice, touching on some surprising settings where restorative justice is now being practiced. Restorative justice has a place within the church, as well, perhaps even as a focal point of ministry and mission. *Dr. Stanley Saunders, who serves on the Georgia Region's Commission on Ministry, is a retired New Testament professor from Columbia Theological Seminary. He now practices restorative justice, including "defense-initiated victim outreach" and "facilitated victim – offender dialogue" in response to violent crime.*

**REV. DR. GLORIA McCALL / 03.10**

## **Understanding Ministry OF Children**

This workshop will give information on the historical role of children in the advancement of the gospel message. Can we point to any evidence of God using children? This information will cover various denominations as well as the Disciples of Christ. Class will explore thoughts such as: Where does the church universal and DOC stand on the ministry of children? How do we build spiritual champions of our children without sharing with them the power of the God we teach about and serve? Our children are exposed to the supernatural in many aspects of their lives, but often the teaching of the biblical story is only storytelling without supernatural power. Let's keep the story and find out that it is simple and easy to include the working mighty power of our God. Children are waiting to see it, hear it and feel it. In this seminar you can test the waters on expanding your own paradigm of the ministry OF children. *Rev. Dr. Gloria McCall is the retired former Minister of Children at Ray of Hope Christian Church, Decatur.*

**RECONCILIATION COMMISSION / 03.24**

## **Virtual Reconciliation Town Hall: The Conversation Continues**

Disciples have been committed to racial reconciliation since 1968, when the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., opened the eyes of our church to the sin of racism. Still, more than 50 years later, racism persists in our society. The Georgia Disciples Reconciliation Commission, along with other Regions, Congregations, and General Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is committed to building inclusive, engaging, and loving communities – and moving towards racial justice. To that end, we continue the conversation, prayer, and story-sharing – which is the work – that will bring us closer to Jesus' prayer that we "may all be one" (John 17:21). Please join with us in another of a series of Town Halls that we have convened since 2020. *The Georgia Disciples Reconciliation Commission includes Rev. Beth Wendl (Chair), Pastor Chris Carter, and Rev. Denise Bell.*