



Guiding Purpose

The Christian Church in Greater Kansas City, the Christian Church in Kansas, and the Christian Church in Nebraska imagining how three Regions can partner to more effectively and creatively work together as they live their way into their purpose of strengthening connections and relationships between people and the Church at Local, Regional, and General levels.

01 EVERYONE LEADS
KLC

02 Day of Service
TRP-Intergenerational
Day of Service

04 Rooted & Renewed
Elder Training
There are videos!!

TOGETHER FOR GOOD

November
2025
Issue #3

Strengthening local church vitality through effective and creative partnership.

Rev. Dr. Lara Blackwood Pickrel Earns Certification as Facilitator for Kansas Leadership Center's *When Everyone Leads* Curriculum

Rev. Dr. Lara Blackwood Pickrel, Senior Minister of Hillcrest Christian Church in Overland Park, Kansas, has completed the certification process to become a facilitator for the Kansas Leadership Center's widely used *When Everyone Leads* curriculum. The certification represents a significant investment of time and study, including several hours of required reading, three days of intensive in-person coursework in Wichita, and the submission of a graded portfolio containing both written assignments and teaching videos.

The *When Everyone Leads* curriculum emphasizes adaptive leadership and equips individuals and groups to make progress on complex challenges by mobilizing leadership at all levels—not just from those in

formal positions of authority. Facilitators trained through the Kansas Leadership Center help communities, congregations, and organizations develop the skills and shared practices needed to move forward together.

Rev. Dr. Blackwood Pickrel is one of three Disciples clergy currently completing this facilitator program. She is joined by Rev. Dr. David Dubovich, Associate Regional Minister for the Kansas Region, and Rev. Bill Rose-Heim, retired Regional Minister for Greater Kansas City. Once all three have finalized their certifications, they plan to



collaborate on ways to bring the *When Everyone Leads* curriculum to congregations and ministry groups throughout the Tri-Regional Partnership.

Together, these leaders hope to help church communities cultivate the kind of shared leadership, creativity, and adaptive capacity that will strengthen ministries throughout the Nebraska, Kansas, and Greater Kansas City Regions.



Regional
Assemblies

{ KS August 8, 2026
Great Bend, KS

{ NE October 9/10, 2026
Hastings NE

{ GKC To Be
Determined

Welcome



On Saturday, August 16th, Hillcrest Christian Church of Overland Park, KS joyfully welcomed nearly one hundred Disciples from across the Nebraska, Kansas, and Greater Kansas City Regions for the first Tri-Regional Partnership Intergenerational Day of Service. Rooted in our shared identity as Disciples of Christ and grounded in the growing collaboration of the Tri-Regional Partnership, this gathering created space for worship, service, conversation, and community-building across generations and across three vibrant Regions of our church. As a part of this partnership, we are learning that we are together for good—for the good of our neighbors, our congregations, our Regions, and the world God calls us to love.

Tri-Regional Partnership Intergenerational Day of Service Draws 100 Disciples for Worship, Work, and Fellowship

After a full morning of service, participants shared a bountiful lunch together. Hillcrest volunteers prepared an abundant salad and sandwich bar that offered something for everyone. The meal became an extension of the ministries of the day—where strangers became conversation partners, conversation partners became friends, and the beginnings of a new kind of tri-regional family took shape. Clergy and laypeople mingled freely, sharing stories of ministry, hopes for their congregations, and excitement about what this blossoming partnership might yet become.



The day began with a warm welcome and an uplifting devotional time, including Bible study, prayer, and singing. Following the devotional, participants moved into their morning service session, and the fellowship hall quickly became a joyful flurry of intergenerational energy.



The afternoon brought renewed energy and purpose. Volunteers continued making cards and assembling hygiene kits, and hundreds of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches were prepared for Micah Ministry. It was inspiring to watch parents and grandparents work alongside teenagers and children—proof that service is one of the most natural ways to build intergenerational community. In every corner of the building people lived out the call to be together for good.

Volunteers of all ages assembled hygiene packs for Micah Ministry—now operating under Intersect KC, the new non-profit launched by Independence Boulevard Christian Church in Kansas City, MO.

Others gathered around tables in the library to create hundreds of handmade greeting cards: encouragement cards for teachers at the Hillcrest Early Learning Center, welcome cards for refugee families served by KC for Refugees, and brightly decorated notes for residents of Silvercrest at Deer Creek. A third group poured their creativity into crafting protest signs for Intersect KC, lifting their voices—artistically and prophetically—on behalf of justice and compassion for our neighbors.



Tri-Regional Partnership Intergenerational Day of Service Continued

We ended the day with a deeply meaningful worship service, including Communion and an inspiring sermon from our General Minister and President, the Rev. Terri Hord Owens. Her message reminded us that Disciples are at our best when we remember who God calls us to be: people who act boldly, love generously, and serve faithfully.



Sharing the Lord's Table with three Regions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) offered a powerful reminder that we belong to something larger than ourselves—larger than any one congregation or even one Region.

We belong to God and to each other.

None of this would have been possible without the extraordinary generosity of volunteers and donors. Hillcrest Christian Church offered hospitality with grace and warmth, preparing the building, organizing food, and welcoming every participant with the kind of care that made the day feel

special. Volunteers from all three Regions donated thousands of items for hygiene kits, brought supplies for handmade cards and sandwiches, and gave their time freely and joyfully.



General Assembly 2026

The 2026 General Assembly will be held July 10-11, 2026 as a virtual event.

As details are released by the Office of the General Minister and President, Regional Offices and the Tri-Region Partnership will work to help spread the word. STAY TUNED!!



We cannot say thank you enough—to the planners, the donors, the hospitality team, the worship leaders, the children and youth who jumped right into every task, and every person who traveled from Nebraska, Kansas, or across the KC metro to be part of this day. As part of the Tri-Regional Partnership, this event embodied our shared commitment to be together for good—living out our faith through collaboration, generosity, and love.

The Day of Service was more than a single event. It was a sign of hope—a reminder that our future as Disciples is grounded in shared mission and deepening relationships. If August 16th is any indication, God is doing something exciting among us. And truly, this is only the beginning



Rev. Dr. Joshua Bell



Rev. Dr. Joshua Bell, was born in Enid, Oklahoma, but grew up all over the world and graduated from McAlester High School. Joshua is the oldest of 6 kids and knows that he is absolutely cooler than his younger siblings!

Joshua is married to the love of his life, Carman Lowe and they have 2 beautiful kids, Madeline and Quinton Bell.

Joshua started working at FCC of Perry, OK in August of 2017 and loves every minute of working in and around the church

Rooted & Renewed

community. Before Joshua was in ministry, he did a little of everything from singing opera and teaching junior high and high school kids to cooking BBQ competitively! Josh completed his Masters of Divinity and his Doctor of Ministry degrees at Phillips Theological Seminary in Tulsa.

He has a passion for teaching and ministering at the local church level.

Additionally, Rev Bell has worked to build out a website of resources to assist everyone in their eldership, whether new to the role or someone with years of experience. Find it at:

<https://www.chaliceresources.com>

The Kansas Region and Rev Bell hosted a 5 week training series directed at Elder training. This five-part event was conducted via Zoom.

Creating a more intentional and active eldership in your congregations yields benefits beyond just praying at the communion table.

All are invited to use these recordings in your own congregations to help educate all at the local level.

Find the series playlist titled "Rooted & Renewed Elder Training series" at: <https://www.youtube.com/@CCK-DOC>



Regional Minister Search

NE

A search committee has been formed to gather applications for the new Nebraska Regional Minister. Please pray that they will find the guidance and grace they desire while journeying through this process.

Region Minister Applications

GKC

The Greater Kansas City Region is accepting applications through December 1, 2025 for their next Regional Minister. Prayers are welcomed that they locate the best pastor to provide leadership and guidance for their region.

Regional Minister Sabbatical

KS

Rev. Tom Stanley, Regional Minister for Kansas entered into Sabbatical on November 1. Tom will return to his duties on February 1, 2026. While he is away, Rev. Bill Rose Heim of GKC is providing assistance as needed.

Lunch and Learn with Alumni

Connect, Share, and Grow with Fellow Alumni via Zoom

Join us for an engaging *Lunch & Learn* session exclusively for Kansas Leadership Center (KLC) Alumni! This virtual gathering is an opportunity to reconnect, share experiments that you are working on that have been successful or not.

This is also an experience for each of us to reconnect to KLC's concepts through videos as well as our engagement into the KLC principles.

Join us on January 21, 2026 from noon to 1 via Zoom. Those who have attended any of the KLC trainings will receive the zoom link the day before our time together.

For questions or more information, please contact Rev. Dr. David Dubovich at ddubovich@kansasdiscalples.org

We look forward to seeing you at the *Lunch & Learn* and continuing our leadership journey together!



MISSION: What we do

To foster civic leadership for stronger, healthier and more prosperous communities in Kansas and beyond.

MISSIONAL PILLARS: The work

Equip people and organizations to work across differences toward progress for the common good.

