

# COME to the welcome table

THE COMMUNION TABLE IS NOT ONLY AT THE CENTER OF WORSHIP IN OUR CONGREGATIONS, IT IS AT THE CENTER OF WHO WE ARE AS THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST).

Disciples congregations celebrate the Lord's Supper every Sunday. The table is open. That means that all are invited to respond to Christ's invitation to draw closer to Him around the communion table. For Disciples, the open table is a powerful symbol of our deep commitment to Christian unity. The open table honors diversity even as it celebrates unity in Christ. All are welcome.

Come to the welcome table!

We believe that God is calling the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to be a faithful, growing church that demonstrates true community, deep Christian spirituality and a passion for justice. This is our vision.



THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (Disciples of Christ) was founded in the early 1800s in the United States. Seeking to move beyond denominational disagreements, the founders envisioned a united church of Jesus Christ modeled on the New Testament.

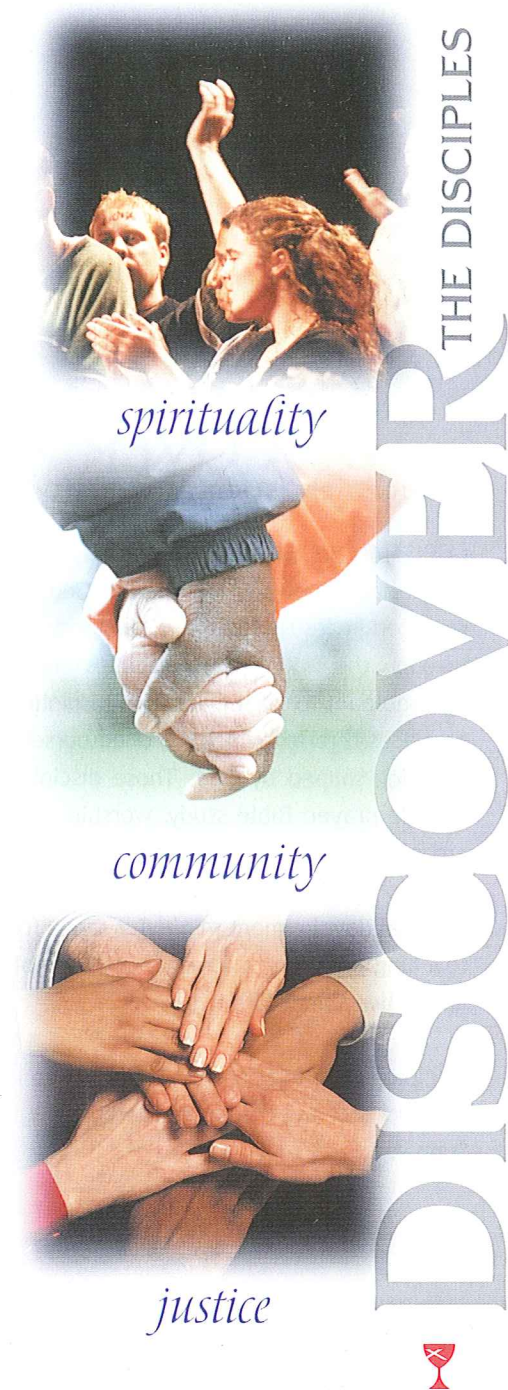
Today our nearly 3,800 congregations still share these characteristics:

- Each congregation is self-governing and calls its own pastor.
- Worship services may be formal or informal, and include lay women and men in leadership.
- Open discussion of issues is encouraged. Diversity of opinion is common.
- We are growing in racial and ethnic diversity.



The chalice symbolizes the central place of communion in worship for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The X-shaped cross of the disciple Andrew is a reminder of the ministry of each person and the importance of evangelism.

*Produced by Communication Ministries  
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)  
P.O. Box 1986 • Indianapolis, IN 46206  
Disciples on the Web: [www.disciples.org](http://www.disciples.org)*



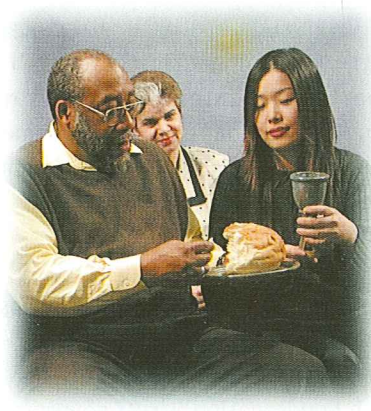
The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)  
In the United States & Canada



**DISCOVER**  
deep christian spirituality

**CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY IS** a way of life that relates who we are to who God is as revealed in Jesus Christ and as experienced through the Holy Spirit. Disciples encourage one another in the spiritual disciplines, practices through which we open ourselves to being shaped by God. Those disciplines include prayer, Bible study, worship, stewardship, service, study of the church's tradition and hospitality to strangers. Our spiritual development ministries range from teaching children to love Jesus to helping adults live Christ-like lives.

Disciples congregations meet weekly to worship God and celebrate the Lord's Supper.



**DISCOVER**  
true community

**ALTHOUGH EACH DISCIPLES** congregation has its own personality, all have members who care for each other, opportunities to grow and learn, and ways to serve others. As churches grow in true community, members care deeply for one another. But true community also means reaching out to include others—encouraging the growth of a diverse community in which all are welcomed and cared for.

In Disciples congregations, study and fellowship groups offer opportunities to ask honest questions, share opinions and discover ways to deal with life's difficult issues and to grow in faith.

Disciples seek to provide a rich sense of community for people of all ages and walks of life.



**DISCOVER**  
a passion for justice

**DISCIPLES MINISTRIES DON'T STOP** at the front door of the church building.

We work to make a difference in our neighborhoods and the wider community. As followers of Jesus we help in soup kitchens and food pantries, shelter the homeless and care for children. We advocate for fairness in laws and public policy. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has committed itself to become a pro-reconciling, anti-racist church.

Our shared ministries reach out across North America. We "get dirty for Jesus," repairing homes and community centers, cleaning up after natural disasters and bringing hope where there is despair. Disciples facilities care for abused children and their families, persons with disabling conditions and senior adults. Our higher education institutions educate and train women and men for the ministry and for careers in other fields.

Disciples overseas ministries stretch around the world. With partner churches we tell the Good News, help dig wells, train pastors, immunize children and much more. We also help persons in times of natural disaster, economic upheaval and war.

What do  
Disciples believe?

**LIKE MOST CHRISTIANS, DISCIPLES AFFIRM:**

- Jesus Christ is the son of the Living God, and offers saving grace to all
- All persons are God's children

**BELIEFS AND PRACTICES USUALLY ASSOCIATED WITH DISCIPLES INCLUDE:**

- **Open Communion.** The Lord's Supper, or Communion is celebrated in weekly worship. It is open to all who believe in Jesus Christ.
- **Freedom of belief.** Disciples are called together around one essential of faith: belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Persons are free to follow their consciences guided by the Bible, the Holy Spirit study and prayer, and are expected to extend that freedom to others.
- **Baptism by immersion.** In baptism the old self-centered life is set aside, and a new life of trust in God begins. Although Disciples practice baptism by immersion, other baptism traditions are honored.
- **Belief in the oneness of the church.** All Christians are called to be one in Christ and to seek opportunities for common witness and service.
- **The ministry of believers.** Both ministers and lay persons lead in worship, service and spiritual growth.

*"The Mission of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ): to be and to share the good news of Jesus Christ, witnessing, loving and serving from our doorsteps to the ends of the earth."*