



The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in South Carolina

“Treating You with Love Because Jesus Loves You!”

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2026 Theme: “Profecting Growth and Unity In The Body” Ephesian 4:16 NIV

REGIONAL CHURCH STAFF

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Accomplishments from 2025:

The South Carolina Region is pleased to present this report to the General Church, highlighting significant milestones in ministerial development, leadership formation, and congregational engagement.

Eight students successfully completed the Christian African-American Ministers (CAAM) Program, an initiative designed to equip clergy with the theological foundation, practical skills, and spiritual formation necessary for effective pastoral leadership. We are further encouraged to report that seven additional students are currently enrolled in the CAAM Program, while two students are pursuing the Master of Theological Studies degree, reflecting the Region’s sustained commitment to academic excellence and ministerial preparation.

The Transformation Team continues to provide comprehensive education and guidance through extensive training initiatives in Pastoral Care, Ministers’ Training, Deacons’ Training, Elders’ Training, Lay Leadership Development, and Youth Ministry Formation. In February 2026, twelve deacons and six elders participated in leadership training held at Camp Christian, demonstrating a strong investment in congregational vitality and servant leadership.

The Region also had the honor of hosting the Winter College of Regional Ministers Retreat in Charleston, South Carolina, fostering collaboration, renewal, and strategic vision among clergy leaders.

The South Carolina Disciples Women’s Ministry continues to thrive under the capable leadership of Minister Claudette President, advancing its mission through faithful service and impactful programming.

Youth engagement remains a vibrant component of regional life. During the 22nd South Carolina Regional Conference of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in South Carolina, the Youth Ministry facilitated a dynamic and enriching experience for seventy-five young participants. The conference was marked by worship, fellowship, and spiritual renewal for all in attendance. Among the distinguished participants were Rev. Dr. Paul Koch, Rev. Dr. Jack Sullivan, Jr., and Rev. Dr. Donald Gillett, II. The conference was graciously hosted by New Hope Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), under the leadership of Rev. Edward L. Cushingberry,

Jr. In addition, Rev. Bobby Gilliard was installed as pastor of Andrew Christain Church Disciple of Christ in Andrews, SC.

Collectively, these efforts reflect the South Carolina Region's ongoing dedication to strengthening congregations, cultivating leadership, and advancing the mission of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

A Hope for 2026:

It is our strategic objective to establish a sustainable level of financial support sufficient to advance the ministries and long-term goals of the South Carolina Region, thereby enhancing our ability to contribute meaningfully to the mission and work of the General Church. A key component of this initiative is attaining one hundred percent reporting participation among congregations within the SC Region, fostering greater accountability, transparency, and collective stewardship.

We remain steadfast in our commitment to functioning as one unified body—collaboratively pursuing wholeness across the Region—while embodying and reflecting the transformative presence of hope, light, and love within the communities we are called to serve.

Challenges Ahead:

We are committed to investing substantial and diverse resources in the development of our youth and lay leadership. Intentional training and formation are essential to providing them with a strong theological and practical foundation for effective service and leadership within the Church. To strengthen the Region's financial capacity in support of these initiatives, we are considering the implementation of a capital campaign as a strategic means of resource development.

Additionally, we seek to cultivate a deeper sense of intercongregational community, fostering collaboration among churches and expanding access to shared ministries and programs, including initiatives such as Vacation Bible School and other formative activities.

While the past three years have presented notable financial challenges, the Region currently maintains assets totaling \$141,000. In keeping with sound fiscal stewardship, contributions are received through both traditional check payments and secure electronic platforms. Furthermore, we intend to retain the services of a Certified Public Accountant to conduct a comprehensive review of our financial practices and to provide informed recommendations to the Regional Board, thereby ensuring accountability, transparency, and long-term sustainability.

A congregational story of strength or hope in your region that the General Board members can share with their own congregations:

We are intentionally working to strengthen and enhance ministry throughout South Carolina by developing a comprehensive evangelism strategy designed to foster congregational growth and spiritual renewal. Central to this effort is a renewed

commitment to revitalizing youth ministry within all congregations, ensuring that young people are provided with meaningful opportunities to learn, lead, and mature in their faith within supportive and nurturing church communities.

In addition, New Grove Hall Christian Church, which disaffiliated from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) several years ago, has formally voted to return to fellowship with the Disciples of Christ in South Carolina. The South Carolina Region has likewise affirmed and approved their reinstatement into regional fellowship, marking a significant moment of reconciliation and renewed partnership in ministry.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Dr. Freddie Lawton, Sr.