

2025 Annual Report to the General Board Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Arizona Spring 2026

Rev. Dr. Jay Hartley, Regional Minister

Kerry Swindle, Regional Moderator

Bendiciones, queridos colegas de la General Board:

An accomplishment of 2025:

Our New Church Ministry Team (NCMT) establishing a new category of “Emerging Congregations.” This allows us to formally be working with new church starts that are not yet developed enough to be a “congregation in formation.” In many cases they involve a leader who is working towards being commissioned or ordained and needs the formal support of a congregation to do so. We have 2 new “emerging congregations” whose leaders are working with RCOM and NCMT.

We also hired a new DWM coordinator whose bilingual skills will facilitate more connection and coordination between our Spanish-speaking and English-speaking women.

Hope for 2026:

We are beginning 2026 with a visioning process led by Ministry Architects to try to bring more focus to our mission, vision, values, and strategy. Our Regional Minister is also beginning work with an Executive Coach. Our hope is that these processes of discernment will result in more impactful, intentional and pro-active ministry, as Regional ministry can often be overwhelmingly reactive.

Challenges ahead:

The change in the U.S. administration has created major challenges for us. Around 40% of Arizona Disciples identify as Hispanic. Hispanic pastors report members staying home from worship because of fear of going out in public. One is considering going to on-line only gatherings. The well-developed focus of the Arizona Disciples Border Initiative, to support asylum seekers who had lost the support of sponsors, has been thrown topsy-turvy and is having to pivot to discern and meet the changing reality.

We also have a property that has been for sale for 2.5 years, during which time three signed contracts have fallen through, and this is a source of financial stress.

A congregational story of strength:

Foothills Christian Church on the north side of Phoenix, under the outstanding leadership of Rev. Rebekah Krevens, has experienced rapid (for us) membership growth, adding around 80 members in 2025. In September, they added a second Sunday morning worship service because they no longer had space for everyone. The Region supported Foothills with a grant to cover expenses of moving to a second service and hiring a part-time children's minister.

Statistics:

Number of Congregations: 19 (including 2 congregations in formation) + 2 emerging congregations

Regional Staff:

Rev. Dr. Jay R. Hartley –Regional Minister and President

Matthew Clark – Regional Ministry Administrator

Briana Cruz – Disciples Women's Ministry Coordinator

Supplemental Report

Our latest annual report: [Assembly Report and Docket here](#).

This is from October 2024 at our bi-annual Regional Assembly.

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