

Tennessee West Area Disciples Women's Ministry  
2025 Spiritual Journey



Lady Bridgett Turner, Esq., Lady Rhonda Spencer, Mrs. Ashley Robertson, Rev. Dr. Kim Murray and Rev. Darnita Brassel

On March 22, 2025, Tennessee West Area Disciples Women's Ministry held their annual Spiritual Journey at Lindenwood Christian Church in Memphis Tennessee. In honor of Disciples Women celebrating 150 years, there were 150 women registered for this awesome event. The theme was "Beyond Religion and Spirituality" and the scripture reference was Romans 12:4-5. The panelist for this Spiritual Journey were Pastor's Wives that included: Lady Bridgett Turner Esq. of Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church, Lady Rhonda Spencer of New Direction Christian Church, Mrs. Ashley Robertson of Lindenwood Christian Church and Rev. Dr. Kim Murray of Anointed Temple of Praise, and the Panelist Moderator was Rev. Darnita Brassel of Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church.

The purpose of the panelist dialogue was to encourage church leaders and members to be intentional about the inclusiveness of multiple generations to move beyond religion and spirituality to ensure sustainability of church and ministry growth. The moderator opened the dialogue by sharing that the presentations will consist of the **What**, **Why** and **How** of going beyond religion and spirituality to be inclusive of multiple generations. The panelist shared that religion could be an organized structure church and spirituality is more focused on one's personal growth. When addressing whether there is a need to be both religious and spiritual, the panelist referenced II Timothy 2:15 that states, "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that need not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of God." They emphasized religion could be more of going through the motion of following doctrines and formality. They further shared that it is important to have both religion and spirituality to be grounded in one's faith experience journey by referencing James 1:27 which states that "Pure and undefiled religion before God the Father is to care for orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained by the world".

The dialogue addressed the 'Why' multiple generation connection. In doing so they conversed about the hope for the church's future. One panelist gave an insightful revelation that as the director of the children ministry at her church, she gives the children 'Jesus'. In doing so, when the youth go/move away from home (maybe college or adulthood) they can tap into their faith and call upon Jesus when facing difficult challenges and situations. Furthermore, another panelist stated that the

church needs to be intentional about connecting with younger children and provide room for them to share their abilities and gifts. She also specified that there is a need to move far away from “We have always done it this way.” Another panelist indicated that churches are closing on a regular basis because of the lack of inclusiveness of younger generations. One pastor’s wife, highlighted that the hope for future church growth is that there should be safe spaces for the youth where they are seen, heard, embraced, affirmed and loved. While another pastor’s wife shared that something happens between youth and adulthood. The church should be a place that displays love consistently when members return back to church. There should be a soft-landing place for those who are in need. One suggestion was to affirm, receive and involve children where they are in life and not to get caught up in the demographic with judgements. One powerful statement was that leaders are to ensure that the youth are rooted and grounded in the word of God and give them wings to go forth and live out who God has created them to become. She sealed her statement with Isaiah 55:11 "So is my word that goes out from my mouth; it will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire, and achieve the purpose for which I sent it."

The panelist moderator posed the question, how can Christians leaders support young people to aspire leadership? The panelist responses included: Mentorship that goes beyond a couple of hours or months, it should continue from youth to adulthood; youth are to be given opportunities to lead out of their God given treasury and talents and older leaders are to step back to allow opportunities for articulations and involvement; provide occasions for creative expressions and do so without judgements; and if Christian would walk the walk that they preach, others will see and incorporate their good works, especially the younger demographic.

The audience was asked if they could identify a common thread in today’s panelist dialogue. There was a resounding response that ‘love and acceptance’ resonated the most.

The panelist and moderator were thanked for their participation in the dialogue by West Area Coordinator, Lori Franklin and Tennessee Disciples Women’s Ministry President, Etta Harris.



Article submitted by:

TDWM President, Etta Harris