

In Memphis there is a place to belong, know God, and put love into action

When Directional Pastor Jamin Carter and Executive Pastor Mandy Grisham walked into Memphis Pizza Café two years ago, they were searching for a denomination that their place of worship, [Christ City Church](#) (CCC), could call home. What they didn't expect to find was a new family that would embrace who they are.

Today, the faith community is a member of the [Christian Church \(Disciples of Christ\) in the United States and Canada](#), and it continues its mission in Memphis, TN to cultivate followers of Jesus who serve with heart, worship in wonder, and create with purpose.

On May 17 and 24, your participation in this year's **Pentecost Offering** supports emerging and affiliating congregations—like Christ City Church—that are putting love into action.

Belonging to community, believing in God, and following Jesus

In 2010, CCC started off as a non-denominational church for young people in the Midtown neighborhood of the city. It espoused complementarianism, a theological view that women and men are spiritually equal, but have different roles in the home, church, and society.

However, as leadership changed, the congregation began to see how this way of doing church could not succeed long term. In 2018, it adopted egalitarian theology, allowing both men and women to equally lead as pastors and elders. While this move pushed several local faith communities to sever their relationships with CCC, it put the wheels in motion to hire Pastor Mandy as their Executive Pastor down the road.

That same year, the faith community started renting space from Disciples of Christ congregation Central Christian Church and developed its eight practices—choosing presence, seeking health, cultivating spirituality, embracing diversity, engaging culture, creating beauty, showing mercy, and pursuing justice. Since then, these practical ideas have helped the people of the congregation become co-laborers in creating God's kingdom on earth. In 2023, CCC became open and affirming.

As the church became more spiritually mature, there was a growing desire among its leadership for greater structure and spiritual oversight, so they began to explore different denominations that it could join.

Acting on advice from Central Christian Church, Pastor Jamin and Pastor Mandy contacted Rev. Jeff Lindenwood of [Lindenwood Christian Church](#) the following year about becoming part of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). They met him at Memphis Pizza Café and received an invitation to attend the [Christian Church in Tennessee's](#) upcoming regional assembly. Pastor Jamin found the DoC identity statement compelling, so he, Pastor Mandy, and their spouses went. Amid their deep dive into the Disciple of Christ's passions, ministries, and leadership, they realized that many of the congregations their flock had

partnered with in social justice initiatives across Memphis were part of the DoC denomination.

“For us to get connected as quickly as we did was a divine and Holy Spirit led timeline,” recalls Pastor Mandy, “because that weekend—after searching for a denomination for years—gave us a chance to answer a lot of questions we had in a really short amount of time.”

After returning from the event, CCC’s elders and members—the latter of which are called partners—entered a discernment season. This saw the faith community hosting a panel discussion of Disciples pastors who could help their congregation decide whether to join their denomination, as well as conferring with [Meizon Church](#), another formerly non-denominational congregation that joined the Disciples.

“A lot of our congregants grew up in white Evangelicalism and are very disenchanted with it,” explains Pastor Jamin, “so they were very wary of institutions and joining a denomination.”

In 2025, the congregation affiliated with us, the same year Central Christian Church gifted the faith community its facility and CCC received a [Holy Places Grant](#) from [Disciples Church Extension Fund](#) to address deferred maintenance needs in the 102-year-old building.

“Joining the Disciples of Christ is making clear for us as a church what we do want and what we do want to be a part of, not just what we don’t want to be a part of,” shares Pastor Jamin. “And I think that’s a really necessary process for growth.”

Running to the needs of the marginalized and disinherited

As CCC grows into its new identity, it continues to desire that every person who is part of its own church family—many of whom make up the same demographic that it started with over a decade and a half ago—to show mercy and pursue justice.

“Justice is about everybody being able to get what they need as opposed to charity ministry, or what we might call mercy ministry,” clarifies Pastor Jamin. “Charity is giving people some relief. And both are needed.”

The congregation has put mercy into practice for many years by running a clothes closet during its Tuesday night soup kitchen. Today, it also operates a sandwich ministry on Sundays after worship service, distributing and dropping off sandwiches at various locations.

As for pursuing justice, CCC’s mercy and justice team partners with [MICAH \(Memphis Interfaith Coalition for Action and Hope\)](#), a grassroots organization—which many Disciples leaders, including Pastor Jamin, are personally involved in—that addresses issues related

to housing and liveable neighborhoods, transit equity, and transformational justice. Through this partnership, the church campaigns for policy change in their city.

When Tyre Nichols was fatally injured by police officers in 2023, MICAHA and CCC pushed for six policing practices and criminal justice reforms to be enacted. While they were successful, Nashville retroactively made those defunct. More recently, they have met with the mayor of Memphis alongside MICAHA to advocate for a fair, sustainable, and equitable city amid ICE raids.

“There's some despair, for sure, because of what's happening in our country,” reflects Pastor Jamin. “I personally have felt unsafe just doing the work that I do, and we do have Latino people and immigrants in our congregation. I check in with all of them.”

Justice is Love in Action and your [gift](#) to the 2026 Pentecost Offering supports efforts like these.

Serving with the future in mind

As CCC works to stabilize its operations, it has big dreams, including increased building sustainability and racial diversity within its faith community, with the goal to be a church for the future, not the present.

“Theologically, I think the church's greatest struggle is how to honor, incorporate, and utilize the traditions and the wisdom of collective spirituality. If we serve a living God, a God who is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, then the church should also be able to access the future,” concludes Pastor Jamin. “Things like institutionalization and committees often bog down the church. And so, the aspiration is to be a church for the future that is still grounded in the knowledge of the past.”

When you [make a gift](#) to the Pentecost Offering, half of it stays in the region in which it is received to support local new churches. The other half goes to [New Church Ministry](#), which trains, equips, assists, and multiplies emerging and affiliating congregations and their leaders.