

Discovering the Disciples

Key People

Barton W. Stone was a prominent Presbyterian preacher, who rose to notoriety as a leader of the 1801 revival at Cane Ridge, KY, which was reportedly attended by 20,000 people. He and four other ministers formed the Springfield Presbytery in 1803, after theological disagreements with the Kentucky synod. Stone's primary disagreements were with the traditional understanding of the Trinity, and with the notion that Christ's death on the cross was a substitution for the punishment owed to humanity. While Stone's intention was to reform the denomination from within, it became clear that this new grouping was creating division. So, they dissolved the Springfield Presbytery in 1804, and aimed to unite with the larger body of Christ. They became known simply as the Christian Church, the forebears of what is now the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), to which Covenant belongs.



Key Moments

The 1801 Revival at Cane Ridge, KY, was a large camp meeting, the kind that characterized the Second Great Awakening, which took place largely on the American frontier. The site is believed to be the longest log structure in the USA, and is still in use. It was restored in the 1930s, including the re-installation of the original slave gallery, which was removed in the 1820s by the original congregation because of their support of the abolitionist movement. Barton Stone is buried on the grounds at Cane Ridge.

Core Values

Disciples have long valued higher education. There are 14 Disciple colleges and universities, including Texas Christian University, Chapman University, Hiram College and Barton College, named for Barton Stone, in Wilson, NC.

Our Priorities

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has identified four guiding priorities: to become an anti-racism/pro-reconciling church, to establish 1000 new congregations by the year 2020, the transformation of 1000 existing congregations by 2020, and the leadership development necessary for these new and renewed congregations.