



**WE PRESS ON**

2022 North Central Jurisdictional Conference  
of The United Methodist Church



**Episcopal Nominee Information  
2022 North Central Jurisdictional Conference  
for  
Rev. Luis Felipe Reyes (el-he/him)**



**Name:** Luis Felipe Reyes (el-he/him)

**Conference:** Northern Illinois

**Street/PO Box Address:** 506 Lynn Avenue

**City/State/Zip:** Sycamore, IL 60178

**Telephone:** 630/878-8178

**Email:** REVLFR4@gmail.com

**Current Appointment:** Sycamore United Methodist Church, Sycamore, IL.

**Family:** I am married to Norma, and we have three kids, Nory Liz Bettilyon (Jason), Liz Enid Reyes (Gustavo Rodriguez) and Norman Luis. Two grandchildren Norah Joyce Bettilyon (RIP 2014) and Adeline Enid Bettilyon.

## **Background and Experience:**

### **Formal Education (please also include significant Continuing Education):**

Masters of Divinity, McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, IL, 1994  
Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration, Inter-American University of Puerto Rico, 1984

Stephen Ministry Training, Oak Brook, IL, 1999  
Healthy Congregations Training, Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, 2004  
Clergy Clinic in Family Emotional Process, Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, 2003  
Advanced Clergy Clinic in Family Emotional Process, Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, 2004 – 2007  
Quadrennial trainings, GCF&A, GBHEM, 2004 – 2016  
National Church Development Training, Northern Illinois Conference, 2006  
Church Mediation Skills Training, Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, 2008  
Healthy Congregations Facilitator Training, Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, 2007  
Leadership and Anxiety in the Church, Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, 2009  
GPSS (God, Person, System, Self) Leadership Coaching, SamaraCare Counseling & Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, 2018

### **Ordination Dates and Conferences of Which You Were a Member:**

1989 – Deacon's Orders & Probationary Membership, Puerto Rico Annual Conference (now The Methodist Church of Puerto Rico)  
1990 – Transfer to Western New York Conference (now Upper New York Conference)  
1992 – Transfer to Northern Illinois Conference  
1995 – Elder's Orders & Full Membership, Northern Illinois Conference

### **Previous Work Experiences and Pastoral Appointments:**

Manager, Job Partnership Program, United States Department of Labor, Arecibo Regional Office, Puerto Rico, 1984 – 1987  
Pastor, Iglesia Metodista Unida Emanuel, Santurce, PR, Puerto Rico Annual Conference (now The Methodist Church of Puerto Rico), 1987 – 1990  
Pastor, Primera Iglesia Metodista Unida, Buffalo, NY, Western New York Conference (now Upper New York Conference), 1990 – 1992  
Pastor, Hermosa – Salem/El Buen Pastor UMC, Chicago, IL, Northern Illinois Conference, 1992 – 1995  
Pastor, Berry Memorial UMC, Chicago, IL, Northern Illinois Conference, 1995 – 2000  
Pastor, First United Methodist Church of Bensenville, Bensenville, IL, Northern Illinois Conference, 2000 – 2011  
Lead Pastor, First United Methodist Church of Lombard, Lombard, IL, Northern Illinois Conference, 2011 – 2022  
Lead Pastor, Sycamore United Methodist Church, Sycamore, IL, Northern Illinois Conference, 2022 – Present

## **Connectional and Ecumenical Church Experiences:**

### **1. Current:**

Chair, Conference Relations, Board of Ordained Ministries, Northern Illinois Conference, 2022 – Present

Faculty, Licensing School, Spanish Language, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, 2022 – Present

### **2. Previous:**

Conference Coordinator on Youth Ministries, Puerto Rico Annual Conference (now The Methodist Church of Puerto Rico), 1984 – 1990

Member, Committee – Autonomous Affiliated Church, 1984-89

Member, Executive Committee - Council on Young Adults, 1983-87

National Coordinator, Ecumenical Youth and Young Adult Annual Gathering, Puerto Rico Annual Conference (now The Methodist Church of Puerto Rico), 1988 – 1989

Member, Annual Conference Design Team, formerly known as Western New York Conference, 1990 – 1992

Member, Executive Committee, Northern Illinois Conference, La Junta Hispanoamericana (was The Hispanic Caucus), 1993 – 1996

Chair, Northern Illinois Conference Committee, National Hispanic Plan, 1996 – 2000  
Secretary, MARCHA (Methodist Associate Representing the Cause Hispanic/Latino Americans), National Hispanic Caucus, 1992 – 1996

Consultant, National Hispanic Plan, General Board of Global Ministries, 1998 – 2010

Chair, Conference Council on Ministries, Northern Illinois Conference, 2000 – 2004

Member, Conference Council on Finance and Administration, Northern Illinois Conference, 2000 – 2004

Member, Board of Ordained Ministry, Northern Illinois Conference, 2000 – 2012

Member, Member-at-large, Executive Committee, 2000 – 2004

Secretary, 2004 – 2008

Chair, Candidates Conference, Year 2006 – 2012

Vice Chair, 2008 – 2012

Chair, Hispanic Caucus, Northern Illinois Conference, 2002 – 2004

Member, Commission on Religion & Race, Northern Illinois Conference, 2004 – 2008

Chair, Worship Committee, Northern Illinois Conference, 2004 – 2012

Member, Committee on Episcopacy, North Central Jurisdiction, 2008 – 2012

Member, Conference Council on Finance & Administration, Northern Illinois Conference, 2010 – 2020

Chair, Budget Committee, Year 2012 – 2016

Member, District Committee on Ordained Ministry, Aurora District (now Prairie Central District), Northern Illinois Conference, 2012-2022

Chair, 2014 – 2022

Chair, Aurora District Shepherding Team, Aurora District (now Prairie Central District), 2016 – 2021

Member, Committee on Investigation, Northern Illinois Conference, 2015 – 2020  
Member, Annual Conference Shepherding Team, Northern Illinois Conference, 2016 – 2021  
Member, Commission on Role and Status of Women, Northern Illinois Conference, 2016 – 2021  
Founding Member, Interfaith Partners of Villa Park and Lombard, 2018 – 2022  
Delegate, North Central Jurisdictional Conference, 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012, 2016, 2020  
Delegate, General Conference, 2004, 2012 (2nd Reserve), 2020

## **Community Service Activity:**

### **1. Current:**

Board Member, PrimeCare Community Health (FQHC), Chicago, IL, 2015 – present  
*A Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) is a health center that has been certified by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as meeting certain standards for quality and effectiveness. PrimeCare provides comprehensive services to low-income, uninsured, and other underserved populations in the North and West side of Chicago.*

Chair, Personal Committee, 2016 – present

Vice Chair, Board, 2022 – present

### **2. Previous:**

Mentor, Pleasant Lane Elementary School, Lombard, IL, 2018 – 2020

*Volunteer mentor for at-risk children.*

Member, Chamber of Commerce, Lombard, IL, 2015-2022

*I represented the First United Methodist Church of Lombard at the Lombard Chamber of Commerce.*

Member, Board of Education, Bensenville School District 2, Years 2004 – 2010

*I was appointed by the Board in 2004 and elected full member in 2006. During my time on the Board, we approved a plan to introduce bilingual education and plans for construction of two new schools.*

Volunteer, PADS, Lombard, IL, 2017 – 2020

*PADS mission is to end homelessness in DuPage County. First United Methodist Church of Lombard began participating in the program during my appointment.*

Board Member, North DuPage Special Education Cooperative, DuPage County, IL, 2006 – 2010

*I represented the Board of Education of Bensenville on the North DuPage Special Education Cooperative.*

## **Publications, Awards, Honors:**

“Temptations & Consequences”, *Upper Room’s Disciplines Daily Devotional Book*, June 11-17, 2007

“Trust in God”, *Upper Room’s Disciplines Daily Devotional Book*, May 12-18, 2014  
Distinguished Member, PrimeCare Community Health, Chicago, IL  
Distinguished Member, Board of Education, Bensenville, IL

### **Special Interests and/or Hobbies:**

What brings me joy is spending time with family and friends and cooking for them the recipes I grew up with in Puerto Rico. When I’m not cooking, working or spending time with my grandkids, I’m watching a good movie, reading a good book, enjoying a comedy show or you can find me biking.

## **Faith and Leadership**

### **Describe Your Understanding of the Nature and Mission of the Church:**

The Church is the amazing gift of God where we continually experience the living Christ and the unapologetic presence of the Holy Spirit. The early Methodist Church gathered as the body of Christ for prayer, study and fellowship. They were sent out addressing and working for the transformation of society. The Church continues to be a place where grace becomes real, and we are invited into an unbelievable journey of discipleship. Today, more than any time in our history, the Church must continue to live out the Pentecost experience where God’s words of love are expressed through multiple languages and cultures. The Church must continue to meet God’s children in every corner of the world right where they are in their journey of faith.

The 2019 General Conference proved that we see unity as uniformity. The actions of that General Conference reflected our inability to make room to agree and disagree in love. We forgot that the world was watching, we forgot that our actions and our words do matter. We forgot that in our disagreements we created losers and winners.

The church that we all love has lost its appeal to this generation. Even though we believe in hope, let's not be naive in thinking that our reality has changed. We continue to experience racism, homophobia, ageism, sexism and systemic oppression in the Church despite being called to live by grace, love and compassion. In the last few years we have watched the rise of white supremacy in society and we see how white privilege continues to prevail in the Church. These realities invite us to look deeply inside ourselves individually and collectively as the Church, and ask the question, “Is this the church we are called to be?”

The mission of witnessing to the love of God and God’s justice must continue as we proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ and “make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”

### **Share Your Vision for The United Methodist Church:**

My vision for The United Methodist Church is tied to our history. We started as a movement within the Church in response to the status quo. What resulted was a great gift to the world: the concepts of personal and social holiness. I envision a Church that is fully engaged in the transformation of the world. I envision a Church where all of God's children experience God's grace and God's radical hospitality. I envision a Church where brokenness, caused by violence, hatred and privilege, is healed. I want to see a Church where my LGBTQIA+ siblings don't have to struggle to have a seat at the table. I dream of a church where we no longer have to defend our cultures, traditions and expressions. We all need a church where we don't have to be afraid to call out injustice and name it. We all need a church where our Wesleyan heritage of personal holiness is a priority, and where every community of faith is aiming to be discipleship-driven through the practice of the spiritual disciplines. I envision a church where we embrace the guiding principles of agreeing to disagree and have respect for our mutual humanity.

At the Special Session of the North Central Jurisdiction (November 10-11, 2021), in our collaborative wisdom, we created and supported a document reflecting our understanding of "building beloved community." This document expresses our shared values that, if taken to our core, can look like God's kin-dom here and now.

### **Describe Your Concept and Style of Leadership:**

I describe it with the phrase, "For such a time as this!" The Church needs leaders who have an understanding of "servant leadership" as disciples of Jesus Christ. We also need leaders who have a greater capacity for listening, a greater ability to be adaptable and a greater understanding of what it means to live out the Pentecost experience. We need leaders who embrace both an understanding of conflict as part of our human experience and collaboration as a core principle.

My leadership style is one of collaboration and relational in nature. I'm a listener who never takes for granted people's experiences and the context from which they speak. I enable spaces for people to participate in systemic changes. I am a practitioner of "agree to disagree in love." The practice of listening and enabling space for others was instrumental for me in guiding two congregations in an amazing process for becoming "Reconciling Congregations." The second congregation voted 98% in the affirmative after many sacred conversations that were both honest and painful.

### **Describe Your Gifts and Graces:**

I bring the gift of discipleship and I model a lifetime commitment to God's call of love, service and justice. I bring the gift of listening and providing space for others to discern their path. I believe strongly in mentoring others so that their gifts and graces can be shared with the church and so that they can be empowered to be leaders. Administrative, facilitative and organizational skills are required to be an effective bishop. I believe I have these qualities as well. As one who migrated from Puerto Rico to the United States, I know firsthand how important it is to embrace, honor and respect differences. However, I do not shy away from naming injustices clearly and boldly even if it causes discomfort or challenges the status quo. As we live out the Pentecost experience, we need to name the tension and pain we experience so that we can address it honestly. Uncomfortable conversations are necessary for the health of the church. And, yes, these conversations need to lead to transformation.

## **Describe How You Have Experienced the Call to the Episcopacy and How God Has Prepared You for the Episcopacy:**

In the summer of 1990, in my hometown, the then Puerto Rico Annual Conference held its annual gathering. Bishop Susan Morrison was presiding at that time. As she was memorizing the liturgy for my daughter's baptism (in Spanish), we talked about my new appointment and move to the city of Buffalo, NY. I expressed my gratitude to her, and she said, "never hesitate to respond to God's call along your journey regardless of where the call may lead you." She, and her ministry, had a profound impact on my life.

In my 35 years of ministry, I have dedicated a good portion of these years to being a mentor. I have journeyed with candidates in their process towards ordination or licensing as they discern a call to ministry. I have been blessed by them for allowing me to be part of their journey. My first two experiences for the election of bishops was as a visitor to my first jurisdictional conference in 1996 and then as a delegate in 2000. At the time, I had not thought of myself as an episcopal candidate and yet I felt an uneasiness and restlessness in my heart. Over time, after periods of intense prayer and long conversations with colleagues who saw the gifts for episcopacy in me, I discerned and realized for myself that the gifts, graces and leadership style that had been nurtured in me over my lifetime had prepared me to offer myself for the office of the Episcopacy. The person I am today is a result of how I have been formed and reformed through my walk with God.

## **Endorsements**

The Northern Illinois General & Jurisdictional Delegation  
MARCHA (*Methodist Associated Representing the Cause Hispanic/Latino American*)

**Episcopal Election Covenant** has been signed and received by NCJ Secretary, Rev. Paul R. White.

## **Episcopal Candidate Forum:**

The Rev. Reyes will be participating in the North Central Jurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy (NCJCOE) video forum. This forum will consist of a fifteen-minute interview with each episcopal candidate who elects to participate. All interviews will be posted on to the North Central Jurisdictional (NCJ) website on or around September 1, 2022.