

Leading vital ministries and initiatives at every level of our worldwide church, Kennetha Bigham-Tsai has a proven record of having the courage to tell hard truths with compassion. Her passion for peace and justice ministries and for the health and vitality of the local church was nurtured from an early age.

Kennetha grew up in the Baptist Church in Austin, Texas. She credits her mother with helping her learn to preach by teaching her a love for words. After earning a degree in sociology from Harvard University, she served in lay ministry with urban youth in the A.M.E. Church and pursued a career in public relations and writing before responding to God's call to professional ministry. Kennetha was ordained in The United Methodist Church in 2009. She says she chose the UMC because of its social principles and emphasis on a theology of grace.

Kennetha currently leads the Connectional Table (CT), which discerns and articulates the vision for the worldwide church and stewards its mission, ministries and resources. Before coming to the CT in an executive role, she served on its board as a member of the Executive Committee, chair of their Leadership Discernment and Community Life committee, and on a task force and writing team that helped shape legislation to create a compromise on human sexuality and maintain the unity of the church. As a board member and its chief executive, Kennetha has led the CT in living more fully into what it means to be a worldwide church committed to its mission.

Kennetha also has served as a general and jurisdictional conference delegate or alternate since 2012 and currently is the co-chair of her delegation. In 2012, she chaired the subcommittee of Church and Society II that dealt with legislation on reproductive rights. She designed and facilitated a process to bring people from highly conflicting viewpoints together to listen deeply to one another and reach a consensus.

Kennetha has led in her annual conference as chair of the Board of Church and Society, on the Conference Leadership Team, Board of Ordained Ministry, and Conference Trustees. She has been active in justice issues, including as an active member of Black Methodists for Church Renewal and on the board of Justice for Our Neighbors. Kennetha has served local congregations in East Lansing and Kalamazoo and has brought a pastor's heart and strategic vision to each of her appointments. She has also served as a conference district superintendent.

A sought-after speaker and preacher, Kennetha has led numerous workshops on leadership, church vitality, and cross-racial, cross-cultural ministry. In her free time, she enjoys writing poetry, fiction and creative nonfiction. She likes to read, take long walks, garden, and be in nature.

She and her husband, Kee Tsai, have been married since 1994 and have two children, Keeton and Kamden, and a German Shepherd, Kylo. The family enjoys spending time together, whether on adventures to the Colorado Rockies or Michigan's Sleeping Bear Dunes.