

The Advance Journal, Volume 2

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Volume 2 Introduction

Volume 2 of the 2022 NCJ Advance Journal contains the information delegates will need for the Episcopal election process, reports and recommendations that will be voted upon, and other pertinent information. Delegates need to bring both the Advance Journals Volume 1 and 2 with you to Jurisdictional Conference. There will be no extra copies available.

Corrections to Advance Journal, Volume 1

My sincere apologies for incorrections and misspellings printed in Volume 1 of the Advance Journal:

To Bishop Hee-Soo Jung on the misspelling of his name.

To Cindy Saufferer on the misspelling of her name in the Minnesota Delegation.

To Michael Crawford and Jennie Edwards Bertrand as part of Jennie's name was added to Michael's name in the Illinois Great Rivers Delegation.

For the printing of Bishop Anne Sherer-Simpson as the Council of Bishops Representative at the Consecration Service. At this time, we do not know who that representative will be.

If there are other corrections that have not been reported I again give my apologies.

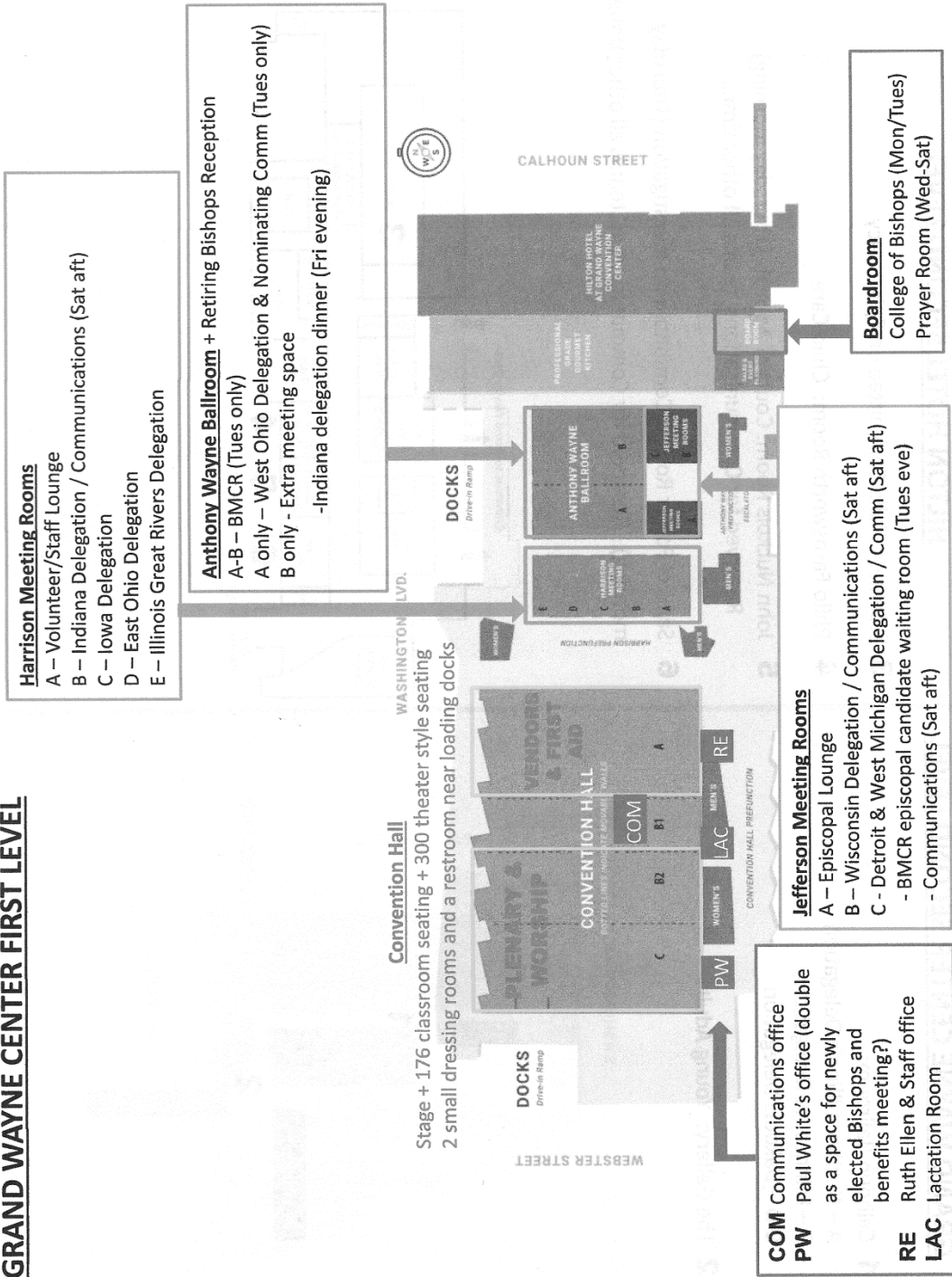
Rev. Paul R. White, Secretary
NCJ Conference

Updated COVID-19 Policy

The NCJ Host Committee has continued to monitor the COVID situation in the Fort Wayne, Indiana area and work with the Convention Center as we move closer to our conference date. At present COVID cases are low and both the Host Committee and the Convention Center have agreed on new relaxed guidelines from what was originally given in the Advance Journal Volume 1. It is at each individual's discretion on mask wearing. If you are at high risk of disease you may wish to wear a mask, otherwise, you are free of mask wearing.

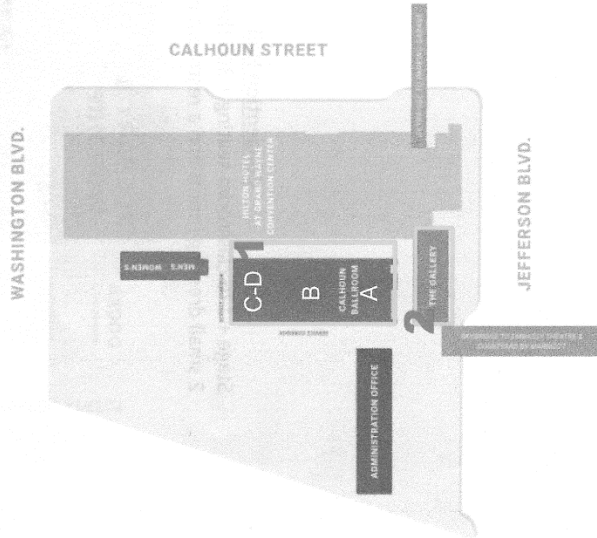
The NCJ Host Committee and the Convention Center will continue to monitor and provide any further updates on the COVID situation should it change before the conference.

GRAND WAYNE CENTER FIRST LEVEL



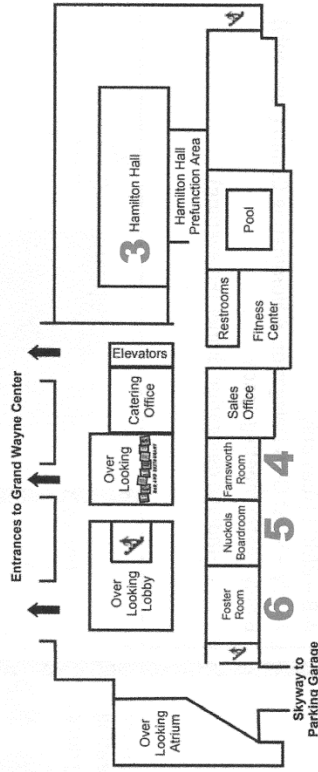
GRAND WAYNE CENTER SECOND LEVEL

- 1** Calhoun Ballroom:
 A – Northern Illinois Delegation
 B – Minnesota Delegation
 C-D – Dakotas Delegation
- 2** The Gallery: Young Adults



HILTON HOTEL SECOND LEVEL

- 3** Hamilton Hall: Committee on Episcopacy
- 4** Philo Farnsworth Room: Child Care
- 5** John Nuckols Room: Court of Appeals (Thursday morning)
 Reserved for Communications' teams all other times
- 6** Samuel Foster Room: Committee on Investigation (Thursday morning) - Reserved for Communications' teams all other times.



DAILY SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Tuesday, November 1:

9:00 a.m. – 12: noon	Bishops & BIPOC Delegates Gathering & Conversation
12:00 noon	Committee on Episcopacy
1:00 – 5:00 p.m.	College of Bishops
4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Information and Registration Desk Open
5:15 – 7:15 p.m.	Dinner for College of Bishops, Spouses, & Indiana Cabinet & Spouses
7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Episcopal Nominee Forum sponsored by Black Methodist for Church Renewal (BMCR)

Wednesday, November 2:

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Information and Registration Desk Open
8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Vendor/Display Area Open
8:00 a.m. – 8:p.m.	Prayer Room Open
10:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.	Calling the Conference to Order – <i>Bishop Trimble</i> Opening Service of Worship – <i>Bishop Bruce Ough</i>
11:45 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Recess / Lunch
1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Opening Business Session – <i>Bishop Bard, Presiding</i> Welcome Roll Call
	Confirmation of Jurisdictional Committees and Secretarial Staff
	Committee on Rules of Order
	Committee on Episcopacy
2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	First Ballot Report of First Ballot Introductions based on the First Ballot
3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Nominee Forums
4:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Delegation Meetings
5:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.	Second Ballot
5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.	Recess / Dinner

From this point forward the agenda becomes fluid with balloting, reporting of the same, taking precedence. Cycles of balloting will be interspersed with the business of the jurisdiction, spot conversations as needed, and Celebrations of Ministry. The Celebrations of Ministry will highlight various ministries in conferences of our North Central Jurisdiction.

7:30 p.m. – 9:45 p.m.	Business Session – <i>Bishop Jung, Presiding</i> Balloting (various ballots and report of ballots throughout) NCJ Mission Council Report NCJ Treasurer Report Spot Conversations as Needed
9:45 p.m.	Delegation Meetings
10:30 p.m.	Recess

Thursday, November 3:

8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Information and Registration Desk Open
8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Vendor/Display Area Open
8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Prayer Room Open
9:15 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	Service of Worship – <i>Bishop Tracy S. Malone</i>
10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Recess / Break
10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.	Business Session – <i>Bishop Palmer, Presiding</i>
	Ballot and Report of Ballot
10:45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Nominee Forums
11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.	Ballot and Report of Ballot
	Episcopal Address – <i>Bishop David Bard</i>
	Ballot and Report of Ballot
12:15 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Recess / Lunch
1:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.	Business Session – <i>Bishop Kieseey, Presiding</i>
	Balloting (various ballots and report of ballots throughout)
	Committee on Nominations Report
	Impact of White Supremacy & Christian Nationalism/ White Nationalism within The U. M. Church
4:00 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.	Recognition of Retirement Service (Offering to be taken for UMCOR Migration Project)
5:15 p.m.	Greeting of Retiring Bishops and Spouses – Lobby of the Convention Center
6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Host Night Dinner & Program
8:15 p.m.	Business Session (If Needed) – <i>Bishop Haller, Presiding</i>

Friday, November 4:

8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Information Desk Open
8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Vendor/Display Area Open
8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Prayer Room Open
9:15 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	Service of Worship – <i>Bishop Julius C. Trimble</i>
10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Recess / Break
10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Business Session – <i>Bishop Malone, Presiding</i>
	Balloting (various ballots and report of ballots throughout)
	NCJ Business
	Presentation on Gun Violence – Angelo Mante (follow-up discussion during the noon meal break)
12:00 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.	Recess / Lunch
1:45 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.	Business Session – <i>Bishop Beard, Presiding</i>
	Balloting (various ballots and report of ballots throughout)
	NCJ Business
	Conversation to Understand the Impact of Homophobia, Transphobia, and Heterosexism within The U. M. Church
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Area Dinners (as desired)
8:00 p.m.	Consecration Service Rehearsal

Saturday, November 5:

8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Information Desk Open

10:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Service of Consecration – *Bishop Sally Dyck, Preaching*

Bishop John L. Hopkins, Service Coordinator

11:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Reception for New Bishops

Delegation Room Assignments

The following rooms have been assigned for scheduled delegation meeting times as well as other times a delegation may wish to meet. All rooms are on the first and second floors of the Convention Center.

Dakotas Conference	Calhoun C-D
East Ohio Conference	Harrison D
Illinois Great Rivers Conference	Harrison E
Indiana Conference	Harrison B
Iowa Conference	Harrison C
Michigan Conference	Jefferson C
Minnesota Conference	Calhoun B
Northern Illinois Conference	Calhoun A
West Ohio Conference	Anthony Wayne Ballroom A
Wisconsin Conference	Jefferson B

Episcopal Nominee Room Assignments

The following rooms have been assigned for scheduled Nominee Forum meeting times. All rooms are located in the Convention Center.

Rev. Dr. Todd Anderson	Harrison B
Rev. Kennetha Bigham-Tsai	Anthony Wayne Ballroom A
Rev. Dr. Curtis Brown	Harrison C
Rev. Jacques Conway	Calhoun C-D
Rev. Cara Stultz Costello	Jefferson C
Rev. Dr. Aleze Fulbright	Harrison D
Rev. Dr. Lanette Plambeck	Harrison E
Rev. Jonathan Priebe	Jefferson B
Rev. Luis Felipe Reyes	Calhoun B
Rev. Dan Schwerin	Calhoun A

Report of the NCJ Committee on the Episcopacy 2016-2022 “Quadrennium”

I. The Committee

The NCJCOE met as a full committee thirteen times in the 2016-2022 quadrennium, including several zoom meetings with our College of Bishops. We worked to carry out our responsibilities as charged in Paragraph 524 of *The 2016 Book of Discipline*, as well as to navigate a number of unforeseen changes related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additional work this quadrennium included meetings of an “Episcopal Areas Task Force” to study the possibilities and implications for reducing the number of NCJ bishops from nine to eight; conducting an additional 2022 “Summer Survey” to update the Committee on the status of each Annual Conference, and several “new member orientations.”

The Committee began with twenty-two members, including four from Michigan, as the Detroit and West-Michigan conferences began transitioning to a single Conference. Several of our Committee members stepped aside after 2020, and one Michigan member was not replaced, moving us to 21. (Next quad we will have 20 members representing 10 annual conferences). We have worked hard to facilitate these transitions in membership, orient new members, and help the Committee form a kind of “faith community” with one another and with our College, in an effort to prioritize teamwork and unity. **Special thanks to Valarie Willis** for her faithful coordination of monthly prayer for our bishops, for the past 6 years.

Leadership and Subcommittees include:

Executive Committee: Chair – Sara Isbell; Vice-Chair – Jackie Euper; Secretary – Kennetha Bigham-Tsai; Prayer Coordinator – Valarie Willis; At-Large – Dave Nuckols, Gregory Gross

Assessment: Beata Ferris, Gregory Gross, Aleze Fulbright, Maggie Jackson, Carol Zaagsma, Dan Schwerin, Valarie Willis

Elections: Barrie Tritle, Sara Nelson, Andy Call, Ed Fenstermacher

Retirement Recognition: Katie Crise, Valarie Willis, Anish Hermon, Wade Giffin, Nichea VerVeer Guy, Erica Shannon Stueve

Relationships with Area/Conference Committees on Episcopacy: Elisa Gatz, Dave Nuckols, Jackie Euper

Episcopal Areas Task Force: Sara Isbell, Gregory Gross, Katie Crise, Nichea VerVeer Guy, Barrie Tritle, Beata Ferris, Aleze Fulbright, Anish Hermon

In addition, every Committee member is part of an “interview team” which holds individual conversations/consultations with our bishops every year. We have been richly blessed by strong and mutually respectful relationships between the Committee and the College, and for this we give deep thanks.

Every member of the NCJCOE has served faithfully and in extended capacity, given the changes the UMC and NCJ have experienced and continue to experience. Unanticipated questions regarding retirement, medical leaves, episcopal roles and coverage, etc., have kept us busy and brought forth the spiritual gifts of our members. The Committee is to be commended for its dedication and cooperative spirit.

II. Recommendation I – Character of Bishops

The Committee on the Episcopacy, having consulted with active Bishops David Bard, Frank Beard, Laurie Haller, Hee-Soo Jung, Gregory Palmer Tracy Smith-Malone, Julius Trimble, **recommends that all be passed, commended for their character and continued in the effective relationship.**

The Committee also recommends that the character of retired Bishops Sharon Brown Christopher, Sally Dyck, John Hopkins, Charles W. Jordon, Jonathan Keaton, Deborah Kiesey, Linda Lee, William B. Lewis, Donald A. Ott, Bruce Ough, Sharon Z. Rader, Joseph Sprague and Woodie W. White, **be passed, and that they be continued in the retired relationship.**

The Committee extends its deep gratitude to Bishop Bard, Bishop Haller, Bishop Hopkins, Bishop Kiesey and Bishop Palmer for their faithful coverage of additional episcopal areas in time of need. Your selfless dedication and leadership have been an inspiration.

The Committee also remembers with gratitude and honors the memory of Bishops Michael J. Coyner, Emerson S. Colaw, and Judith Craig, who entered the church triumphant during this quadrennium.

III. Recommendation II: Retirements

The Committee recommends that **Bishop Laurie Haller**, having met the requirements as listed in paragraph 408.2a of *The 2016 Book of Discipline*, and her character having been passed, **be released effective Dec. 31, 2022**, from her obligation to travel through the connection at large, from residential and presidential supervision, and that she be placed in the retired relation, receiving all rights, privileges, and support and provided in *The Book of Discipline*.

IV. Recommendation III: Elections

The Committee on Episcopacy recommends that the North Central Jurisdictional Conference

proceed to elect three (3) bishops at the 2022 session. (*See attached legislation – beginning at the bottom section of this page.*)

V. Recommendation IV: Future Episcopal Areas

The Committee on Episcopacy, recognizing that both the GCFA formula for number of bishops per jurisdiction, and the anticipated reduction in membership due to disaffiliation, indicate a further reduction in number of bishops allotted the NCJ in the near future, recommend the following:

- The Northern IL and Wisconsin conferences, and East and West Ohio conferences (especially Area Committees on Episcopacy, Extended Cabinets and Conference Directors), begin conversations about the possibility of sharing an episcopal area, if such a sharing should be approved by the NCJ, beginning as soon as 2024, and
- All Annual Conferences begin conversations about possible sharing of episcopal areas in the future (noting the clear distinction between “sharing a bishop” and “merging Annual Conferences”), and
- The North Central Jurisdiction form a Task Force to study the “Role of the Episcopacy in the NCJ” to imagine ways to make sharing episcopal leadership manageable, sustainable, and fruitful; and that
- Such a Task Force include members of the College and the NCJ Committee on Episcopacy along with other lay and clergy when deemed appropriate; and that
- The Role of Episcopacy Task Force be prepared to bring findings and proposals to the 2024 Session of the North Central Jurisdictional Conference.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Sara L. Isbell, NCJCOE Chair

NCJ Committee on Episcopacy Recommendation III

Recommendation: NCJ Elect to Nine Bishops in 2022

Submitted by: NCJ Committee on the Episcopacy with consultation from NCJ College of Bishops

WHEREAS: The 2021 Session of the North Central Jurisdictional Conference received and approved the recommendation of the NCJCOE that the number of bishops to be elected in 2022 be reduced to bring the total number of NCJ active bishops to eight;

AND WHEREAS: This recommendation was based on the notification from GCFA that, under the formula approved by General Conference 2016, the NCJ would qualify for eight bishops beginning with the next episcopal season due to membership;

AND WHEREAS: This recommendation was also based on the recently-reported reduction in the Episcopal Fund;

AND WHEREAS: This recommendation was also based on the anticipated trajectory of UMC membership in the NCJ in the coming quadrennium, uncertain in large part due to the launching of the Global Methodist Church and the disaffiliation of churches;

AND WHEREAS: Since the Nov 2021 session, the following realities have changed:

- Judicial Council Memorandum #1446 has indicated that absent General Conference action, the same number of bishops as were approved in 2016 may remain in effect until the next General Conference; and
- The Episcopal Fund has been sustained at a level that no longer indicates urgent reductions; and
- The North Central Jurisdiction has seen first-hand the difficulty and weariness for both bishops and annual conferences, of asking two Annual Conferences to share one bishop without sufficient opportunity for preparation; and
- The launching of the GMC in advance of General Conference has increased the workload for our bishops even more, thus making the current “disaffiliation” season particularly taxing even for single-conference bishops;

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the North Central Jurisdiction vote to return the number of active bishops to nine for the period of Jan. 1, 2022, to the beginning of the next episcopal season (presumably Sept. 1, 2024); and that

TO THAT END the 2022 Session of North Central Jurisdictional Conference will elect three (3) bishops to serve beginning Jan. 1, 2022; also, that

TO THAT END the Dakotas-Minnesota Episcopal area again be united under one bishop.

LET IT BE NOTED that the North Central Jurisdiction anticipates multiple retirements (2 mandatory) in 2024, and therefore will plan to accommodate the reduced number of bishops at that time.

AND THAT THEREFORE, the NCJ Committee on the Episcopacy and College of Bishops will work together to prepare those Annual Conferences most likely to be affected by this reduction, to maximize success and smooth transition.

NCJ Treasurer Report

The history of The United Methodist Church since 2016 has been dramatic and destabilizing. A pandemic shut down the world, forced everyone to think about the weakest among us, and radically shifted the capacity of local churches to worship and witness. Yoked together as a connection, the churches and conferences of the North Central Jurisdiction found new value in sharing in our challenges with those who share our history. It is remarkable, truly, how the North Central Jurisdiction has been resilient and adaptive to these challenges.

All conferences of the NCJ paid 100% of their jurisdictional apportionment, except for one conference that pays their jurisdictional and general conference apportionments at the same ratio as their own receipts.

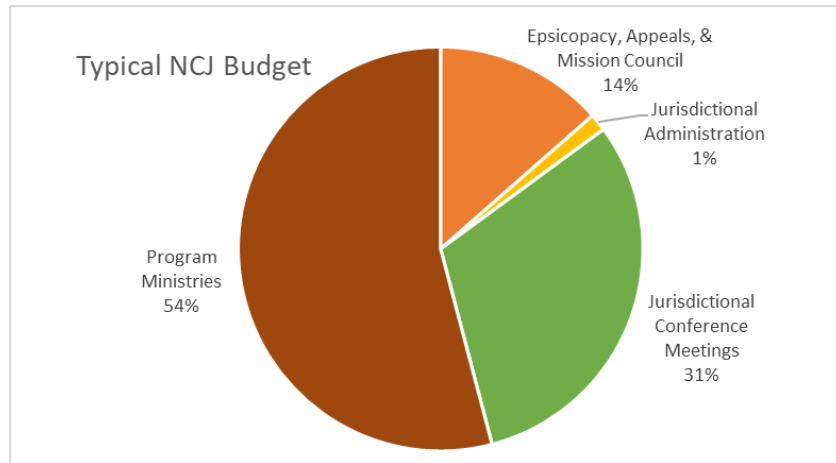
At the last NCJ Conference meeting in 2016 we approved a budget for calendar years 2017-2020. When the pandemic prevented us from meeting to set a new budget, an annualized version of the prior budget was extended into 2021 and 2022. We will present to this conference a budget for 2023 and 2024 so we might return to cycle with a full quadrennial budget in 2024.

Below you will find a report on expenditures and income since the last report to you. In 2016 the conference ended the practice of stating amounts to specific projects and instead created a single Program Ministries line, funded at \$500,000, to be awarded by the Mission Council. This method has served the conference well, in that it has allowed Mission Council to be responsive to good ideas and grant requests when they arise and it has allowed us to adapt to current needs and opportunities. The flexibility permitted the funding of the 2021 NCJ Special Session, as an example. The method of reviewing specific ministry proposals prior to funding resets the role of the Mission Council within the jurisdiction to one aligning resources with opportunities for real impact and has suggested that ministries managed by the Mission Council, such as the Delegation Gatherings in 2018 and 2019, are good uses of the funding.

The disruption to the scheduling of conference sessions has had significant impact upon the financial experience of the jurisdiction in two ways. First, the funds to support hosting the general conference meeting in Minnesota went largely unused. General conference is hosted in a different jurisdiction each time in an alphabetical rotation. The host annual conference faces a great deal of costs. We have been on a 20-year savings plan to aid the annual conference in our jurisdiction selected with these costs. Our funds were used to fund a volunteer coordinator who was working in the conference office. With the cancellation of general conference, only half of the budgeted funds were used. We are thankful to the Minnesota Conference's dedication to stewardship and careful use of resources. Second, the delay of the NCJ conference meeting until 2022 means that the funds reserved for that purpose have not been expended in the quadrennium ending in 2020 but remain in the jurisdiction accounts until this meeting. We do not expect to have any savings from this funding.

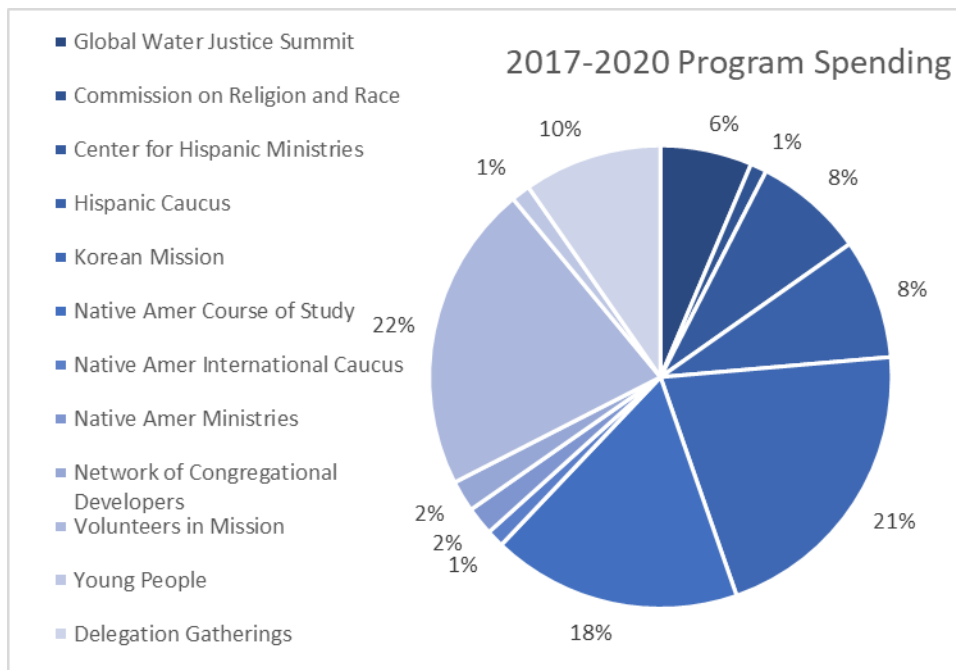
The "Building Beloved Community" document passed at the November 2021 meeting of the jurisdiction included this requirement, "We request the Mission Council evaluate their budget and demonstrate, and report at the next Jurisdictional Conference, how the budget incorporates antiracism work and healing institutional trauma."

Apportionments to the annual conferences of the NCJ are \$873,000 for the quadrennium. Spending for the NCJ Conference session approaches \$300,000. Remember we have approved budgets that include spending from reserves, so the spending on the Jurisdictional Conference is 31% of planned spending. Other jurisdictional committees required by the Book of Discipline are the NCJ Committee on the Episcopacy (meeting annually in person) and the Committee on Appeals



(which hears appeals only when they arise). The Rules of the North Central Jurisdiction creates the Mission Council, which also meets in person annually. Altogether, the NCJ Conference session, these NCJ committees and the spending for administrative expenses, represents a full 46% of NCJ spending supports the structure of the church.

The NCJ budgets \$500,000 in each quadrennium for program ministries, representing 54% of planned spending. Regularly, the Mission Council allocates funding to specific ministry proposals.



Often these ministries are managed by jurisdictional committees, like the NCJ Volunteers in Mission. In some cases, the funds are used for ministries sponsored by the jurisdiction, like the times NCJ delegations gathered to prepare for the General Conference sessions.

Anti-racism work

includes ministries focused upon recognizing the impact of the social sin of racism and developing the capacity of the church to mobilize for its eradication. In 2018 the Mission

Council approved a grant of \$20,000 meant to hold a forum of annual conference anti-racism efforts. Regrettably, the organizers of the ministry were unable to implement the plans. This

unused grant is not reflected in this analysis. A Global Water Justice Summit included very specific anti-racism teachings on allocation of water resources. The NCJ Commission on Religion Race includes anti-racism programming, in addition to other responsibilities. 7% of the 2017-2020 program spending can be described as specifically anti-racist, at least in part.

58% of the program budget seeks to enhance ministry within racial minority communities. In some cases, this involves meetings and programs for leaders across the denomination. Korean Ministries involved grants to specific local churches. The Native American Course of Study is a significant commitment of the jurisdiction and annually trains leaders of Native American worship. The jurisdiction is a body inclusive of racial minority communities choosing to enhance the ministry in this manner. While these ministry outcomes more closely align with typical church goals, such as equipping leaders or forming new congregations, because it is approached within a space where identity and community are embraced, a reader could conclude these ministries address institutional trauma, at least in part.

The remaining programs funded through the jurisdiction is available to and used by all United Methodists but are not specific to anti-racism ministry or to addressing institutional trauma.

It is a true privilege to serve as Treasurer of the jurisdiction and I welcome any questions.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lonnie Chafin

Northern Illinois Conference

FINANCIAL REPORT

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

	<u>2017-2020</u>	<u>2017-2020</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>2021 Actual</u>	<u>2022</u> <u>Budgeted</u>
INCOME				
Apportionments				
Dakotas	30,422.64	30,422.64	7,605.66	7,605.66
East Ohio	84,247.32	84,247.32	21,061.83	21,061.83
Illinois Great Rivers	90,331.85	90,331.85	22,582.96	22,582.96
Indiana	161,474.04	161,474.04	40,368.51	40,368.51
Iowa	76,290.63	76,290.63	19,072.66	19,072.66
Michigan	116,288.96	116,288.96	29,072.24	29,072.24
Minnesota	52,420.56	52,420.56	13,105.14	13,105.14
Northern Illinois	58,505.09	58,505.09	14,626.27	14,626.27
West Ohio	149,773.02	149,773.02	37,443.25	37,443.25
Wisconsin	53,356.64	53,356.64	13,339.16	13,339.16
less uncollected		(11,066.26)	(3,445.10)	(6,500.00)
	<hr/> 873,110.74	<hr/> 862,044.48	<hr/> 214,832.59	<hr/> 211,777.69
Other Income				
Designated Gifts for Korean Ministries		36,000.00		
Designated Gifts for Religion and Race		7,175.50		
Interest Income		8,020.42	563.72	250.00
TOTAL INCOME	<hr/> 873,110.74	<hr/> 913,240.40	<hr/> 215,396.31	<hr/> 212,027.69
EXPENSES				
<u>Meetings of Jurisdictional Committees</u>				
Committee on Episcopacy	60,000.00	45,401.88	700.24	15,000.00
Mission Council	60,000.00	33,250.35	330.00	15,000.00
Jurisdictional Court of Appeals	5,000.00	20,035.01		
Episcopal Location Committee		1,140.60		3,859.40
Other Meetings		1,052.42		
	<hr/> Sub-total	<hr/> 125,000.00	<hr/> 1,030.24	<hr/> 33,859.40
<u>Program Ministries</u>	500,000.00			
Anti-Racism Task Force				5,000.00
BIPOC Delegate gatherings				10,000.00
Campus Ministry Project			8,452.74	1,547.26
Center for Hispanic Ministries		34,000.00		
Commission on Religion and Race		5,056.14		
Global Water Justice Summit		28,314.51		
Grace Pictures			2,500.00	2,500.00

Hispanic Caucus		37,000.00		
Korean Mission		129,000.00		
Latinx Program support at Garrett			10,000.00	
Midwest Mission Distribution Center			15,000.00	15,000.00
Native Amer Course of Study		77,069.51	20,000.00	20,000.00
Native Amer International Caucus		5,405.90		
Native Amer Ministries		8,750.00		
Network of Congregational Developers		9,662.86		
Volunteers in Mission		95,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00
Volunteers in Mission Youth Grant				10,000.00
Young People		5,887.96		
Sub-total	500,000.00	435,146.88	75,952.74	84,047.26
<u>Jurisdictional Conference Meetings</u>				
Delegation Gatherings		42,790.37		
NCJ November 2021 Special Session			49,443.05	
NCJ delegate expenses		500.00		109,760.00
Jurisdictional Conference Expenses	274,000.00	22,420.46		164,240.00
Jurisdictional Conference Journal	12,500.00	200.00		
Sub-total	286,500.00	65,910.83	49,443.05	274,000.00
<u>Jurisdictional Administration</u>				
Archives	800.00	200.00		
Communications, Website, etc.		58.00		
Financial Management Expenses	12,000.00	22,803.07	6,193.00	6,750.00
Sub-total	12,800.00	22,861.07	6,193.00	6,750.00
<u>General Conference Hosting</u>	200,000.00	150,000.00		(50,433.00)
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,124,300.00	774,799.04	132,619.03	348,223.66
Income over (under) expenses	(251,189.26)	138,441.36	82,777.28	(136,195.97)
Running Balance		138,441.36	221,218.64	85,022.67

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	<u>9/30/2022</u>	<u>12/31/2020</u>	<u>12/31/2016</u>
ASSETS			
<u>Current Assets</u>			

Cash and Cash Equivalents	556,667.12	637,704.33	528,474.00
Accounts Receivable	28,377.56	35,008.62	0.00
Investments	327,129.82	0.00	0.00
<u>Fixed Assets</u>	0.00	0.00	0.00
	<hr/>		<hr/>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>912,174.50</u>	<u>672,712.95</u>	<u>528,474.00</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Accounts Payable	400.00	400.00	0.00
NET ASSETS			
Designated - Church Developers	18,000.04	18,000.04	18,000.04
Designated - NCJ CORR	2,119.36	2,119.36	0.00
Unrestricted	892,055.10	652,593.55	510,473.96
	<hr/>		<hr/>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	<u>912,574.50</u>	<u>673,112.95</u>	<u>528,474.00</u>

Budget Proposal

The 2016 North Central Jurisdictional Conference approved a four-year budget for 2017 through 2020. The pandemic prevented the conference to establish a new budget in 2020 for the following years. Judicial Council Decision 1409 established that the general church budget approved in 2016 continues for additional years until the general conference is able to modify it. While the decision does not mention jurisdictional budgets, the Mission Council decided it provides a pattern to follow as a spending plan for 2021 and 2022. So, we have extended the previous budget allocation for 2 additional years.

Even though this is 2022, we propose a four-year budget for the period January 1, 2021, through December 31, 2024. In part, the proposal is informed by actual expenditures for 2021 and 2022.

Apportionments

GCFA calculates the general church apportionment share allocated to each annual conference. This calculation derives from the local church statistics reports. Effectively, general church apportionments signify each annual conference's relative financial capacity. NCJ apportionments are allocated at the same ratio as the general church apportionments. For example, East Ohio is apportioned 9.65% of all the general church apportionments assigned to NCJ conferences, so, 9.65% of the NCJ apportioned amount is assigned to East Ohio.

Current NCJ apportionments to annual conferences used the 2016 general church apportionment schedule. The proposal updates the allocation of NCJ apportionments using more current data in 2024, because annual conferences have already approved budgets for 2023.

Changes in Expense Categories

Budgets for the Committee on Episcopacy and the Mission Council are less than last quadrennium because the groups did not meet in 2021 and have limited expenses in 2022.

Financial Management expenses include costs of accounting software, an NCJ insurance policy, checks and bank fees and a stipend. The budget increases because some of these items were not included in the prepared budget for the last quadrennium.

General Conference is not expected to be held in the North Central Jurisdiction this coming quadrennium, so this cost does not appear in the new budget.

Jurisdictional Conference Meeting Expenses

We will be meeting 3 times over 4 years. This represents a significant commitment of the budget for the next four years.

Deficit Spending

The proposed budget has expenses more than revenues. This is largely a result of the delay of the 2020 Jurisdictional Conference, expected to be funded by the last quadrennial budget, that will instead be funded in the current one. Funds reserved for this purpose from last quadrennium will be used for this purpose.

Budget Proposal

2023 and 2024

	<u>2017-2020</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>Proposed 2021-2024</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>2023</u> <u>Apportionment</u>	<u>2024</u> <u>Apportionment</u>
INCOME				
Apportionments				
Dakotas	30,422.64	27,022.80	7,605.66	4,205.82
East Ohio	84,247.32	84,342.02	21,061.83	21,156.53
Illinois Great Rivers	90,331.85	89,415.22	22,582.96	21,666.33
Indiana	161,474.04	163,036.24	40,368.51	41,930.71
Iowa	76,290.63	77,100.02	19,072.66	19,882.04
Michigan	116,288.96	116,784.88	29,072.24	29,568.16
Minnesota	52,420.56	52,442.66	13,105.14	13,127.24
Northern Illinois	58,505.09	58,662.90	14,626.27	14,784.08
West Ohio	149,773.02	151,711.50	37,443.25	39,381.73
Wisconsin	53,356.64	52,889.83	13,339.16	12,872.35
less uncollected		(22,945.10)	(6,500.00)	(6,500.00)
TOTAL INCOME	873,110.74	850,462.96	211,777.69	212,075.00

EXPENSES

Meetings of Jurisdictional Committees

Committee on Episcopacy	60,000.00	45,700.24
Mission Council	60,000.00	45,330.00
Jurisdictional Court of Appeals	5,000.00	5,000.00
Sub-total	<u>125,000.00</u>	<u>96,030.24</u>

Program Ministries 500,000.00 360,000.00 Awarded at Mission Council discretion

Jurisdictional Conference

<u>Meetings</u>	274,000.00		
NCJ November 2021 Special Session		49,443.05	
NCJ November 2022 Regular Session		274,000.00	
NCJ 2024 Regular Session		325,000.00	higher travel expected
Jurisdictional Conference Journal/Secretary	12,500.00	12,500.00	production and printing
Sub-total	<u>286,500.00</u>	<u>660,943.05</u>	

Jurisdictional Administration

Archives	800.00	800.00	
Communications, Website, etc.		2,500.00	
Financial Management Expenses	12,000.00	26,443.00	Accounting, software, insurance, stipend
Sub-total	<u>12,800.00</u>	<u>29,743.00</u>	

General Conference Hosting

TOTAL EXPENSES

1,124,300.00 **1,146,716.29**

Income over (under) expenses

(251,189.26) (296,253.33)

Procedures for Episcopal Elections

Balloting and Procedures

A 60% majority of the valid votes cast on any ballot is needed for the election of a bishop (see Rule 25-E).

Prior to every ballot, a bishop or member of the Committee on Episcopacy will lead the conference in prayer.

1. Reporting the first ballot:

a) In the event of an election, the name and vote tally of the elected person shall be announced first, and that person introduced to the conference by a member of the Committee on Episcopacy. After such introduction, the bishop presiding will continue reading the names only on the rest of the first ballot.

b) All persons receiving ten or more votes shall be introduced alphabetically by the chair of the Committee on Episcopacy. Upon introduction, each nominee will give name, community where presently residing, and current appointment. An opportunity for withdrawal from nomination shall be given by the bishop presiding.

If any of these nominees has not completed an Episcopal Nominee Information Form previously, one will be furnished by the secretary. The nominee will have thirty (30 minutes) to return the form to the secretary who will copy it for distribution to the delegates prior to the next ballot.

c) The names and vote totals of the nominees will be read in descending order of votes received following the interviews and before the second ballot is taken.

2. Interviews. All nominees, having been introduced to the conference will be assigned rooms for interviews. Space for these interviews will be arranged by the Local Arrangements Committee. The interview moderators shall be the lay members of the Committee on Episcopacy with additional lay members of the Jurisdictional Conference being selected by the committee as needed. Three twenty-minute periods shall be scheduled with ten-minute breaks between each period, providing every delegate an opportunity to hear and question three candidates. This process will be followed by a thirty-minute period for delegation meetings.

3. After the interviews and report of first ballot votes, balloting shall continue for the second and subsequent ballots in this manner: In the event of an election, the name and vote tally of the elected person shall be announced, and that person introduced to the conference by a member of the Committee on Episcopacy. After such an introduction, the bishop presiding will continue the reading of the results of the ballot in descending order of votes received by those who obtained ten or more votes.

4. Balloting shall continue until the elections are completed by 12:00 noon on Friday (unless the conference shall suspend this rule). To facilitate the election process, a variety of opportunities for dialogue shall be offered: nominee interviews, spot conversations, delegation meetings or other processes determined by the jurisdictional conference.

- a. Spot conversations are for those situations when delegations might need a brief time together.
 - b. Delegation meetings provide opportunity for delegations to converse among themselves regarding the election and to receive further information regarding any of the nominees.
5. A nominee may formally withdraw his/her name before the beginning of any ballot by either:
- a. submitting a withdrawal in writing to the Jurisdictional Conference secretary who will immediately notify the bishop presiding and who, in turn, will report the withdrawal, or
 - b. submitting their withdrawal orally through a point of personal privilege (two-minute limit recommended).

Episcopal Nominee Information
for
Rev. Dr. Todd Douglas Anderson



Name: Todd Douglas Anderson

Conference: West Ohio

Street/PO Box Address: 2211 Sweetbriar Lane

City/State/Zip: Cincinnati, Ohio 45239

Telephone: 419-343-7228

Email: tanderson@hpcumc.org

Current Appointment: Co-Senior Pastor, Hyde Park Community United Methodist Church, Cincinnati, Ohio, West Ohio Conference

Family: I am married to Patricia M. Anderson, the love of my life and college sweetheart. Patti is an insurance broker. She has been with me through it all, supporting our ministry and partnering together with Jesus as we have served these 31 years. I cannot imagine doing life or ministry without her. Together we enjoy gardening, golf, watching sports, traveling around the world, and being with our friends and family. In August 2019, we welcomed Scarleth “Liz” Cortez into our home as a foreign exchange student from Nicaragua. Liz is a student at Xavier University majoring in social work. Liz brings great joy to us. Liz was our interpreter on a mission trip in Nicaragua in 2017. A group of us made it possible for her to come and study here in Cincinnati.

Background and Experience:

Formal Education and Significant Continuing Education:

- BS, Union College, Barbourville, KY, cum laude, 1988
- M.Div., Candler School of Theology, Emory University, Atlanta, GA, 1991
- CPE, 1 Unit, Northside and St. Joseph Hospitals, Atlanta, GA, 1991
- D.Min., United Theological Seminary, Dayton, OH, 1997

- Disciple Bible Study Training, 1991
- John Savage Consulting, Mediation Training, 1994
- Prepare/Enrich Training, 1995
- Stephen Ministry Training, 1997
- Nehemiah Institute, 2004-2005
- Cousin's Fellowship in Preaching, Emory University, 2005-2007
- Natural Church Development Training, 2006
- Various Quadrennial Trainings in GCFA, GBHCM, GBGM and GBPHB/WesPath, 2000-2016
- Cultural Coaches Training, West Ohio Conference, Winters Groups/Global Diversity and Inclusion Consulting, 2017-Present
- Creating a Cultural of Renewal – Rebekah Simon Peter Consulting, 2018-Present

Ordination Dates and Conference of Which You Were a Member:

- Deacon, West Ohio Conference, 1991
- Elder, West Ohio Conference, 1993

Previous Work Experiences and Pastoral Appointments:

- Co-Senior Pastor, Hyde Park Community United Methodist Church, July 2022-Present (Cincinnati, Ohio)
- Dean, West Ohio Conference Cabinet, 2021-2022
- District Superintendent, Ohio River Valley District, West Ohio Conference, 2016-2022 (Cincinnati, Ohio)
 - Implemented a five-year strategic plan
 - Implemented Creating a Culture of Renewal, targeting large/medium-sized church pastors. This resulted in pastors leading in renewal of their churches with some significant spiritual and numerical growth. This was stunted by the COVID-19 pandemic; however, the pastors have the skillset to pivot and work the process.
 - Launched Fresh Expressions initiative, resulting in several churches with increased worship attendance as high as 5%, in one case. One church launched 9 new fresh expressions! This work was brokered with local church, district and conference support. The district was the pivot point.
 - Launched revitalization of congregations through partnership with healthy churches. Together we launched or revitalized 9 congregations during this period. One multicultural revitalization reaches about 500 people on three continents each week, thanks to their online pivot when COVID-19 struck.
- Secretary, West Ohio Conference Cabinet, 2018-2021
- Lead Pastor, Hilliard United Methodist Church, 2014-2016 (Hilliard, Ohio)
 - Implemented strategic plan, balanced budget and grew stewardship
 - Stabilized worship attendance. Upon arrival, the church had lost about \$250,000 in stewardship and 150 in worship attendance. We redirected attendance and finances. Within six months, we balanced the budget and increased worship attendance
 - Implemented discipleship pathway
 - Remodeled parsonage
 - Oversaw church building enhancements - finished and paid for a campus renovation project of the sanctuary.

- Senior Pastor, Church of the Master United Methodist Church, 2007-2014 (Westerville, Ohio)
 - Led process and implemented five-year strategic plan
 - Increased worship attendance from 250 to 315 during our tenure.
 - Led and developed a stewardship plan that grew the operations budget to include more mission and ministry by \$200,000 during our tenure.
 - Led and implemented the Telecare ministry, which effectively closed the back door of the church.
 - Led and developed internship program for college students through a grant from the Association of Theological Schools (ATS)
- Senior Pastor, St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 1999-2007 (Defiance, Ohio)
 - Worship attendance stabilized at 300
 - Stewardship program grew the ministry of the church, increasing about \$150,000 during our tenure.
 - Implemented strategic plan using ICA materials
 - Utilized Natural Church Development Plan for feedback
 - Oversaw construction of new parsonage
 - Implemented Stephen Ministry program with 10 trained Stephen Ministers
 - Created, with the Board of Trustees, a plan for using the endowment for ministry, which included building a new parsonage at no expense to the church and setting up categories to spend interest dollars for outreach.
- Associate Minister, Trinity United Methodist Church, 1997-1999 (Columbus, Ohio)
 - Implemented Stephen Ministry program with 20 trained Stephen Ministers.
 - Led Saturday night worship service
 - Led the creation of Young Adult Fellowship with over 60 in attendance
 - Trinity had 600+ people each week in worship
- Associate Pastor, Linworth United Methodist Church, 1991-1997 (Worthington, Ohio)
 - Implemented strategic planning process with the senior pastor and staff.
 - Ecumenical Institute: The Institute of Cultural Affairs, 1992-1999
 - Participated in church building relocation project, including site planning and \$5 million fundraising campaign
 - Led and implemented the church evangelism and assimilation ministry
 - Led and implemented the Telecare ministry, which effectively closed the back door of the church
 - Linworth attendance grew while I was on staff from 399 to 750 in the 6 years we served there.

Connectional and Ecumenical Church Experiences:

1. Current:

- Chair of the Board, UMC Food Ministry, a ministry partnership between Northern Kentucky District, Kentucky Conference and Ohio River Valley District, West Ohio Conference. In 2021, UMCFood served 4.5 million meals across the Cincinnati metro area. 2018-Present
- UMC Food Ministry Board Member, 2016-Present
- Board of Ordained Ministry, West Ohio Conference, 2005-Present
- Bishop's Rapid Response Team for Boundary Crossings, 2022-Present
- West Ohio Immigration Task Force, 2016-Present.
- ORV Immigration Task Force, 2016-Present
- Eclipse Legal Clinic Planning Team for Immigrants, 2018-Present
- NCJ Future Force Task Group, 2020-Present

- Conference Preacher, *Inglesia Colombiana Methodista* Colombian Methodist Church Assembly (Annual Conference October 14-16, 2022 Cartagena, Colombia).

2. Previous:

- Chair, Interfaith Refugee Service in Ohio, Columbus, Ohio, 1997-1999
- Led Mission Trip to Hungary, June 1995
- Ecumenical visitor, Kwang Lim Methodist Church, Seoul, South Korea, Year of Jubilee Celebration commemorating the end of WWII, 1995
- NCJ Regional School of Christian Mission, Oberlin University, 1996
- West Ohio School of Christian Mission, Ohio Northern University, 1996
- NCJ Regional School of Christian Mission, DePauw University, 1997
- West Ohio School of Christian Mission, Ohio Northern University, 1997
- NCJ Regional School of Christian Mission, Manchester University, 1998
- West Ohio School of Christian Mission, Ohio Northern University, 1998
- NCJ Regional School of Christian Mission, Racine, Wisconsin, 1999
- West Ohio School of Christian Mission, Ohio Northern University, 1999
- NCJ Regional School of Christian Mission, North Dakota State University, 2000
- West Ohio School of Christian Mission, Ohio Northern University, 2000
- Defiance District Vision Team, 2001-2003
- Defiance District Committee on Ministry, Registrar, 2004-2007
- Assistant Dean, West Ohio School of Christian Mission, 1996-1998
- Dean, West Ohio School of Christian Mission, 1998-2000
- West Ohio Conference Relations Committee, 2012-2016
- West Ohio Conference CFA, 2000-2008
- West Ohio Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits, 2008-2016
- Mission experiences while serving as local church pastor and as district superintendent –
- Appalachian Service Project, Knox County, KY, 1993
 - Red Bird Missionary Conference, Beverly, KY, 1994
 - Nikiski, Alaska, 1995
 - McCurdy School, NM, 2012
 - Manila, The Philippines, 2015
 - Managua, Nicaragua, 2017 and 2018
 - San Jose, Costa Rica, 2018
 - Brisas del Mar, Colombia, 2017, 2018, 2020
- Teacher at Local Pastors School, North Katanga Annual Conference, Kamina, The Democratic Republic of the Congo. 2018
- Mission U Regional Training, St. Louis, MO, 2019
- West Ohio Mission U, Otterbein University, 2019
- Cabinet Representative to the Annual Mission Conference of the Honduran Missionary Conference, The United Methodist Church, Tegucigalpa, Honduras, 2020.
- Led the Ohio River Valley District in providing the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters a \$5,000 grant to print a draft of the proposed General Book of Discipline in the Official Languages of the United Methodist Church. The Ohio River Valley District's efforts connected the following national and international organizations:
 - Ohio River Valley District

West Ohio Conference
New York Conference Connections
Germany Central Conference
Switzerland Church
Central and Southern Europe Central Conference

Community Service Activity:

1. Current:

- MARCC (Metropolitan Area Religious Coalition of Cincinnati, 2016-Present
- Leadership in the Affordable Housing Ballot Initiative in Cincinnati, 2021
- Hamilton County Narcotics Distribution through ORV Urban Ministry, 2018
- Festival of Faiths Judicatory Leader, 2018-Present
- EquaSion, an Interfaith Justice Ministry in Metro Cincinnati, 2020-Present

2. Previous:

- Worthington Pastors Association, 1991-1997
- NW Partnership Habitat for Humanity, 1993-1997
- Northwest Columbus Pastors Association, 1997-1999
- Defiance, Ohio, Pastors Association, 1999-2007
- Defiance, Ohio, Rotary, 1999-2007
- Defiance Volunteer Connection, Secretary of the Board, 2004-2007
- Mentor in the Tinora School District Defiance Ohio, 2004-2007
- Westerville, Ohio, Pastors Association, 2007-2014
- Westerville, Ohio, Rotary, 2007-2014
- Westerville, Ohio, Rotary Scholarship Committee Chair, 2012-2014
- Westerville, Ohio, Rotary “Rotarian of the Year,” 2014

Publications, Awards, Honors:

- Rotarian of the Year Westerville, Ohio 2013-2014
- Endorsed as an episcopal candidate by the West Ohio General and Jurisdictional Conference delegations in 2020
- Episcopal Candidacy Affirmed by the 2022 West Ohio Annual Conference with 78% majority support.

Faith and Leadership

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

The Church is a gift from God. God has come to humankind to express love for creation, especially through the work of the person in Jesus Christ, who is the sum of all the teaching of the Law and the prophets, and who brings us our salvation. In His work, Jesus calls the faithful together in community for mutual care in worship, prayer, spiritual disciplines, accountability and concrete action through community-building relationships and by meeting the needs of those outside the church. For the United Methodist Wesleyan Revival Movement Christian, the nature of the church is expressed in two ways – Works of Piety and Works of Mercy – as proclaimed by our founder John Wesley and others in the early Methodist Movement.

In that same early movement, the Wesleyan Means of Grace became a way of life lived out in the General Rules of the Church – Do No Harm, Do Good, and Stay in Love with God – which describes our core nature, and how we demonstrate the life and teachings of Jesus in our lives. This is where

Jesus met me, while I was inquiring as a teenager. The purpose of the church is to meet all inquiries of anyone regardless of age, so that they might learn of the saving, grace-filled, sanctifying, love of God in Jesus Christ.

The Church is multicultural and global, and leaders should challenge the status quo in places where it strives to be monocultural. Our nation has faced a pandemic of racism with the painful targeting of persons of color with gun violence, inequity in pay for the same work, equal justice in the courtroom, police misconduct and affordable housing as crucial matters before us. When I was a DS, our district pulled together a task force called Stop Racism. Stop Excessive Force. Stop Silence. We marched in protest rallies and community witnesses across our 5 counties. We offered prophetic witness in the public squares and in local congregations. This team hosted two large gatherings on our teaching platform. One dealt specifically with racism. The other with individual or community-based trauma. Hundreds attended both events and they were followed up with coaching and consulting in the local church settings. The church does this!

Likewise, when COVID hit, we mobilized. In concert with our Bishop, the CDC, and our local health departments, our district dispensed the best real time advice and best practices regarding worship, fellowship and education ministries in the life of the church. During this time, we discovered inequities in food and household resources in the food deserts of our inner cities and the countless rural communities that no longer have grocery stores. This was exacerbated by a lack of financial resources, childcare situations from the many daycares closed, and, of course, schools being shut down. Our Ohio River Valley District of the West Ohio Conference and the Northern Kentucky District of the Kentucky Conference partnered together with UMC Food Ministry, of which I am the Board Chair. Within days, a plan was developed to work together, and we ended up serving kids who needed to eat and did not have access to food at all the public libraries, all the elementaries in Cincinnati Public Schools and several of our churches. In 2021, UMC Food Ministry served 4.5 million meals, by our dedicated staff and countless United Methodist volunteers in the Cincinnati metro area. The church does this!

In Cincinnati's Price Hill neighborhood, we made space available with a closed UM church that was sponsoring an afternoon school program that turned into a pandemic academy. Because we kept that building open for the pandemic academy, 48 kids graduated from high school on time. When the director told us that in a meeting, I wept. Such a little lift on our part had a transformational impact. We broadcast open Wi-Fi, at this location and in a number of places so that people could pull into the parking lot and download schoolwork or pay their bills. It was a time of innovation. The church does this!

Finally, a word about the courage needed to become an inclusive Church: The thread of inclusivity is woven through issues of racism, gender equity, COVID-19 and affirmation of LGBTQIA+ persons. As previously stated, the Church is a gift. Our entry point in the church is through our baptismal vows. There has never been a long list of qualifying factors for admission. It is pretty simple – 1. Do You Believe in Jesus Christ? You either answer for yourself or parents or sponsors do on your behalf. 2. Will you act to eliminate evil and injustice? 3. Will you carry out the central pieces of the nature of the Church – works of mercy and works of piety? The exclusion of so many in the history of the church grieves me. While superintendent, I assigned our first transgender pastor to one of our congregations and they are serving with distinction. Currently, they are appointed by the Bishop, serving with sacramental privilege having successfully graduated from Licensing School, leading the church in growth in mission and ministry. The nature of the Church is expansive in

inclusion. Through all of these challenges and opportunities the presence of Jesus is all around, sustaining us in ministry and spurring us to speak out, calling for inclusion and meeting people where they are. We could not have been present or successful in our work without the Lord's help. The church does this!

Share Your Vision of the United Methodist Church:

My vision is that we create and build a wholly inclusive United Methodist Church, led by lay and clergy who are culturally competent. Above, I talked about the tools needed to make this happen. One of the factors of the pandemics we are living through deals with trauma. In the winter of 2021, we hosted a trauma workshop in the district with over 300 participants and many others watching the event afterwards on our teaching platform. Our personal and corporate trauma must be addressed – doing so is a critical component in my vision of the United Methodist Church. One of the books that impacted me and helped us with planning this event is titled *The Age of Overwhelm*¹. While written and published before 2020, the author names our cultural dysfunctions that became greatly enhanced in the midst of the pandemic – our distractions, boredoms, relationships and self-awareness – all of these in need of our attention! All in need of our best efforts. That the United Methodist Church would lean into these things and teach and lead our culture is worthy as a vision. Traumas of the past few years have included racism, sometimes referred to as our “Original Sin,” the hyperbolic actions and reactions to COVID-19, masking conversations – you remember them – and the divide that caring for one's health caused in communities around the country. All of this called for a reckoning inside and outside the church, some acted, and some denied action was needed. Denial is the most abused mind-altering condition in what is commonly called “the Human Condition.” Vision for a church that sees and acts in real time, is where we have led and are currently leading.

Working with local churches through our *Connecting Points* process, we met one-on-one with clergy and one-on-one with Staff Parish Committees to foster our initiatives and encourage. We listened and heard of struggles and discussed possible solutions. When things were deeply quarantined, we did this via Zoom and then later, in person. We discovered that some places were ready and responded favorably, advancing their Kingdom work, while others were conflicted, or stuck and didn't know how to get out. In all situations, we offered training, coaching and opportunities for considering vision and mission for each of our 116 local congregations. What we discovered is that hard work is hard work. Each pastor and local congregation needed to do their own hard work. Being present with each other is a leadership vision. There is no successful ministry that is not relational at its core.

Describe Your Concept and Style of Leadership:

Leadership is strategic and collaborative and Christ Centered. Leadership involves listening and looking for the best ideas for engagement. Measurable goals and objectives for evaluation are crucial for determining results in real time. Engaging in robust conversations around evaluation for growth and learning improves my personal awareness as I interact with others.

¹ Lipsky, van Dernoot Laura., *The Age of Overwhelm: Strategies For The Long Haul*, Berrett – Kohler Publishers, Inc., Oakland, CA., 2018.

In the local church and at the district level, we have used the strategic plan methodology to measure our effectiveness in ministry. In addition to the strategic plans, a number of resources have been employed for personal growth in leadership. These include the use of inventories (Myers-Briggs, DiSC, StrengthsFinder and the Intercultural Diversity Inventory) that have challenged me to grow in my style of leadership, personal awareness, skillsets and implementation.

My leadership style is strategic, collegial and thoughtful. I am motivated by creating a community to bring individual and systemic change. The renewal of the Church is possible, but it only happens through thoughtful action and relationships. Over the years, I have learned a lot about myself and the leadership gifts that God has given me to rally people around a sense of common purpose with forward momentum. I have done this at the local church and district levels, through strategic planning and implementation, and constant teaching that reinforces the values of the plan to keep us moving toward the hope of being the Kingdom of God.

Without the presence and power of Jesus at work in the midst of community, we will not be successful. He is all around and at work with us. Leaders are to be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit who Jesus sent to teach us and remind us of all that he said. Openness is a spiritual discipline and leadership opportunity. I begin my day with an openness to the Spirit's call.

Describe Your Gifts and Graces:

Faith

Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. (Hebrews 11:1) Faith is a central gift for me and has been so since my childhood. From an early age, the adults in my family instilled in me the value of faith in God. I can't remember a time when I haven't had faith. My favorite character in the Bible is the man in Mark 9 who brought his son to Jesus for healing. "I believe, help my unbelief," is his statement of faith. I deeply connect with this character in the Bible – this is an authentic character. There are moments in every person's life when you connect with an authentic moment in another's life because it reminds you of yourself and your experiences. The places where this story has deeply connected with others in my ministry is when their circumstances were similar to the man in the story – when the bottom drops out of life, a death, an unexpected illness, the surprise that infidelity brings to a cherished relationship. As a pastor, I have been there with people in moments of real angst. Sharing a story like this helps a great deal. It's really okay to be transparent because that is the only way God can heal us. In weakness, it is okay to say to God out loud "I believe, help my unbelief..." I am so glad this story is in the Bible to increase our faith – a faith that is lived out in real time and in real life. I have faith in Jesus because he can look you in the eye and assure you that your unbelief can be transformed.

Non-Anxious Presence

Connected to faith is the sense that I have inside that "*All shall be well, and all shall be well and all manner of things shall be well.*"² Sometimes, whether planned or not, fear will arise in the midst of planning or creating change. Whether at the local church, district or conference level, fear can be a real presence when change is about to occur. The leader needs to be aware of this and demonstrate the gift of non-anxious presence.

² Graves, Dan, **Lesson #32** Christian History Institute Website, Julian of Norwich, Worcester, PA 2022.

When Jesus calmed the Sea of Galilee with the words “Peace Be Still,” this became the scriptural basis of our work to demonstrate a non-anxious presence in leadership. Earlier, I mentioned our Connecting Points meetings with clergy and laity. Prior to the Special Called Session of General Conference 2019, we held a series of information sessions, trying to get out as much information as we could to our people. We engaged with care and respect, but I also shared my convictions about an inclusive church, which includes conservatives committed to doing no harm to persons in the LBGTQIA+ community as compatibilists. While not universally embraced by our laity or clergy, at least people knew that I respected and trusted them enough to share where I am, giving space for others to share with me. It is hard to share a message that is not universally embraced, but it must be done – with grace. I closed by saying that I was planning to serve all our churches regardless of their decision. 2021 and 2022 appointment years were spent trying to make sure that pastors and people were aligned enough in the instance that decisions had to be made regarding one’s place in the UMC. Alignment was important to me because moving is stressful enough, without the added stress of possibly having to move again in a year or two because of the theological misalignment of clergy and local congregations. Doing this, while also keeping an eye on missional disciple making was challenging, but it is crucial to the mission of the church.

In addition, when the COVID-19 pandemic hit in the spring of 2020, we were all trying to understand what would happen and how to move forward in the face of great uncertainty. We tried to encourage our pastors with Bishop Palmer’s leadership. However, as a DS, closer to the local church setting, I had to set a course of action for maintaining connection. Staying in regular contact and encouraging pastors and local church leaders, through video conferencing encouraged our pastors and lay leaders to make the best real time decisions they could make with the information available. We wanted to give as much autonomy to local leadership as possible. Mutations and variants became part of our lexicon, and we continued our efforts to pour into people’s lives instead of dictating “what to do” so that they, too, might be able to lead with a non-anxious presence.

Dr. Roberta Bondi, from Candler School of Theology, my seminary alma mater, used to say in class, “Prayer is 99% presence.” Presence is prayer – prayer is presence – it is a gift.

Strategic Thinking, Planning and Implementing

Jesus was a strategic thinker. His prayer life demonstrated intentionality as “Acton before the Action.” On the other side of prayer was often a prophetic teaching about the Kingdom, whether it was in the form of teaching, healing, preaching or confronting the status quo. This was his strategy.

Throughout the course of ministry, we made way for a process to bring strategic initiatives to life. Over the course of years, we have used as background four movements that guided our work from *Simple Church*³ Clarity, Focus, Movement and Alignment. The purpose, of course, is a deeper, more meaningful and less complicated method for making disciples of Jesus Christ.

In addition, to further my skills, we engaged with consulting people like Rebekah Simon Peter in *Creating a Culture of Renewal*, where I became a Certified Renewalist, invested in overseas relationships and mission engagement, engaged in revitalization of churches through the British

³ Rainer, Thom, S, Geiger, Eric *Simple Church: Returning to God's Process for Making Disciples*, B&H Books, formerly Lifeway Publishing, Nashville, TN., 2006.

Parish Model in a number of communities, founding a number of multicultural faith communities and fresh expression ministries.

Now that we are back in the local church setting, both Dr. Suzanne Allen and I are leading the congregation of Hyde Park Community UMC in an intentional strategic planning process. The Holy Spirit is speaking in our midst as we carefully listen to the Spirit's wooing answers to the questions: Who? What? When? Why? and How? This groundwork is crucial in moving organizations and institutions and should be done early in one's ministry. I have been blessed to have had success with this at the local church and district levels. It would be an early opportunity in Episcopal leadership, as well.

Developing Relationships

All of the portions of gifts point in the direction of developing relationships. There is no ministry that is not relational ministry. Developing relationships is the way to lead in strategic planning. We can only move at the speed of trust. And trust can only be built with sharing life, listening and being present.

In 2018, we built more trust in an experience known as in Mission Together. More than an event it was a relationship building experience, hosted by our Ohio River Valley District. The event was co-sponsored by the West Ohio Conference and the General Board of Global Ministries, now known as Global Ministries. We cast a vision, created a plan and implemented it, by itinerating missionaries and global partners from the countries in Central and South America in our churches in the Ohio River Valley District. We promoted our mission work and strengthened relationships. Missionaries itinerated in over 20 churches and brought people together from 9 countries! This happened because of our Ohio River Valley Strategic Plan and the dedication of the leaders we curated to engage.

The process of building trust and creating long lasting relationships is sometimes considered a leadership skill, but for me it is simple grace and gift. More is always received from the relationships out of the relationship that I am engaged in than I give.

Emotional Intelligence

Helping people flourish is often the result of the gift of emotional intelligence. Many would say that emotional intelligence is a person's ability to say the right thing at the right time, but I would say, listen first, reflect and then to respond.

Being more intentional about listening became a spiritual discipline for me a few years ago. With encouragement from my leadership coach, I decided that I would not inject myself in a conversation until after four other people spoke first. This was a challenge. However, it became life-giving and led to dynamic conversations with others. I discovered that discernment improved dramatically, as well as my ability to reflect and provide counsel when needed. I discovered the power to respond more and react less, and this is a good thing.

Hope

Emotional Intelligence has instilled in me a calm and a connection that can only be expressed as hope. I do not believe that God is done with the Wesleyan Revival movement or the United Methodist Church. We are headed for systemic changes and innovation, and I know that God is at work in our midst.

As a pastor and a district superintendent, at every opportunity, I attempted to instill hope in our churches and their leadership by pouring into our staff and pastors leadership training and spiritual

engagement opportunities. Hope for each person that they could be the best spiritual leader for the church

Hope continues to grow. The world is looking for a different kind of church than the one we currently have on our hands. I have hope that we will be able to pivot to meet needs and expand our mission field. Imagine a church that is not afraid of the future – I can see it!

Humor

I like to laugh. In humor I see deeper truths that might be missed otherwise. My favorite portrait of Jesus is one of him laughing. Humor is a gift. Being able to laugh at yourself is an even better one! It keeps me from thinking too highly of myself and helps me center. Anyone who knows me knows that I love people, and I have a wide circle of friends and colleagues. Together, we serve in a pretty stressful profession and laughter helps with that stress.

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

God has called me to be a Bishop in a Global Church leading in a culturally competent way. This is the direction the United Methodist Church needs to move toward – global in nature, embracing the multicultural world that we have been given. That’s my “Why.” It’s my personal response to God.

The “How” will be in leadership of deepening relationships, strategic initiatives, theological and spiritual discernment, cultural competency and emotional intelligence following the example of Jesus Christ.

Endorsements:

West Ohio Delegation 2020

Affirmation of the West Ohio Annual Conference 2022

**Episcopal Nominee Information
for
Rev. Kennetha Bigham-Tsai**



Website: www.bighamtsai.org

Name: Kennetha J. Bigham-Tsai

Conference: Michigan

Street/PO Box Address: 6137 Horizon Drive

City/State/Zip: East Lansing, MI

Telephone: 517-242-2442 **Email:** kbighamtsai@gmail.com or kbighamtsai@umc.org

Current Appointment: Chief Connectional Ministries Officer of the Connectional Table

Family: Kee Tsai, spouse; Keeton and Kamden Bigham-Tsai, children; and our German Shepherd, Kylo

Background and Experience:

Formal Education (please also include significant Continuing Education):

Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, MDiv, 2003
Harvard University, BA Sociology, 1982

Continuing Education

❖ **Adaptive Leadership**

- ❖ Training and ongoing coaching with Eric Martin of Adaptive Change Advisors
- ❖ Adaptive Leadership Training with Susan Beaumont (Alban Institute)

❖ **Congregational Vitality and Development**

- ❖ Schools for Congregational Development
- ❖ REACH Summits (annual Michigan-area initiative on congregational vitality and leadership development)
- ❖ Multi-Siting—Michigan-area conference on church multiplication

- ❖ Schools for Pastoral Ministry
- ❖ **Family/Congregational Systems**
 - ❖ Conflict Resolution/Family Systems Training (with Richard Blackburn of the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center)
 - ❖ Training in Congregational Systems (Dr. Peter Steinke, Health Congregations)
- ❖ **Worship/Preaching, Trauma-Informed Ministry, Cross-Racial Ministry**
 - ❖ Many years of participation in Calvin Institutes of Christian Worship and Festival of Homiletics
 - ❖ Recent participation in 2022 Festival of Homiletics focused on trauma
 - ❖ Training events on cross-racial/cross-cultural appointments and ministry (GCORR, Michigan Conference Religion and Race)
 - ❖ Training and certification in Healthy Boundaries and Sacred Sanctuaries
 - ❖ 2022 HIPAA certification

Ordination Dates and Conference of Which You Were a Member:

Ordained elder in 2009 in the Michigan Annual Conference (former West Michigan)

Previous Work Experiences and Pastoral Appointments:

Connectional Table – Chicago, IL

2018 – Present

Chief Connectional Ministries Officer: Provide leadership for the Connectional Table (CT) as it seeks to discern and articulate the vision for the worldwide church and steward the mission, ministries and resources of the denomination in consultation with the Council of Bishops. Work with staff and board members to plan and execute meetings, oversee CT finances, facilitate internal and external communications, and help to shepherd the process of evaluation of the missional effectiveness of the World Service-funded agencies.

- ❖ Facilitated the CT’s work to shape legislation for General Conference, including on regionalization; traveled the connection, listening to concerns about the future of the worldwide United Methodist Church.
- ❖ Built and nurtured collaborative relationships across the worldwide church, including with the COB, GCFA, general agencies, Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters and Annual Conference bodies.
- ❖ Instrumental in designing an innovative process to allocate the denomination’s \$358.6 million budget by mobilizing people to engage a challenge that had no clear or simple solution. Helped shepherd process, building coalitions and brokering relationships that facilitated change.
- ❖ Designed four consecutive [State of the Church](#) reports, working with United Methodist Communications from concept to completion.
- ❖ Led projects on the future of The United Methodist Church, including [Imagining the Future](#), which addresses identity, mission, vision and connectionalism. Worked with agencies to conceptualize and develop *Tuesdays at the Table* webinars to provide grounding in theological identity.

Lansing District/Michigan Conference Cabinet – Okemos, MI

2013 – 2018

Superintendent: Provided leadership and supervision for 70+ churches and their pastors, serving as chief missional strategist and conference superintendent in the appointment-making process, working collaboratively with the resident bishop, superintendents and other conference leaders to help realize annual conference goals. Developed a process for assessing the viability of local churches, with more than 40 district churches participating, resulting in creation of a cooperative

ministry, a new-church start, the discontinuance of several local churches, eight churches involved in the conference's "*Vital Church Initiative*," and development of an urban ministry strategy.

Milwood United Methodist Church – Kalamazoo, MI

2011 – 2013

Pastor: Provided pastoral leadership for a congregation in a diverse urban neighborhood, guiding parishioners in faithfulness to the ministries of evangelism, outreach and witness. Restructured the congregation for vitality, creating a vision leadership team that provided focus for ministry efforts and an operations team that streamlined administrative work. Helped equip the congregation to carry out its vision of bringing people into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and greater connection to each other.

During tenure at Millwood, the church paid 100% of its ministry shares and had an average of 10 professions of faith each year.

University United Methodist Church – East Lansing, MI

2006 – 2011

Pastor: Provided leadership for a large university congregation. Functioned as sole pastor for the last six months of the appointment. Led the congregation to re-envision its relationship with a Wesley Foundation associated with the church, bringing reconciliation in the relationship and positioning both ministries for greater collaboration. Started a mid-week Christian education and fellowship program and helped lead the congregation in efforts at visioning and revitalization.

During tenure at University UMC, the church paid 100% of its ministry shares, saw an increase in Christian education attendance and had an average of 14 professions of faith each year.

District Peace with Justice Community – Grand Rapids, MI

2002 – 2006

Director: Planned and coordinated educational events; served as an invited speaker at district churches and community events. Served as a liaison with churches, church agencies, community groups and national and local media to provide advocacy around justice issues. Responsible for fundraising and budgeting.

Connectional and Ecumenical Church Experiences:

1. Current:

General and Jurisdictional Conferences – 2020 Co-Chair of the Michigan Delegation (1st Elected Clergy).

North Central Jurisdiction Committee on the Episcopacy—Secretary

2021 NCJ Special Session of Jurisdictional Conference—Visioning Planning Team. Helped plan the process used to develop the NCJ's "[Covenant to Build Beloved Community](#)."

2. Previous:

Connectional Table Board Member (2012-2018)

Executive Committee, Chair Leadership Discernment and Community Life (LDCL), Vice-Chair Missional Administration Group on the General Conference, Human Sexuality Task Force, Legislative Writing Team.

❖ Led LDCL team to evaluate and support CT staff and shepherd processes for recruiting, deploying and supervising volunteers. Worked with CT members and staff to plan CT meetings and design worship and discernment

experiences that were rooted in United Methodist theology and honored the global context of the CT's work.

- ❖ Worked with the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters, the Commission on the General Conference, United Methodist Communications and other general church bodies to facilitate CT goals.

- ❖ Designed and facilitated a process that sought to unite highly divergent viewpoints to create a compromise on human sexuality and maintain the unity of The United Methodist Church. The process provided a system of reconciliation and broke down divisions by using worship as a vehicle for grace.

General and Jurisdictional Conferences

Delegate to the 2021 NCJ Special Session of Jurisdictional Conference

Delegate to the 2019 Special Session of the General Conference

2016 Jurisdictional Delegate/General Conference Alternate (2nd Elected). Candidate for the Episcopacy endorsed by West Michigan Annual Conference and the Detroit and West Michigan delegations.

2012 General and Jurisdictional Conference Delegate (2nd Elected): Chair, General Conference Subcommittee of Church & Society II Legislative Committee. Dealt with reproductive rights, brought people from highly conflicting viewpoints together to listen deeply to one another and develop legislation via consensus.

Other Connectional Church Experience:

Frequent preacher and teacher at area churches and at annual conference, jurisdictional, and general church events including:

- ❖ 2020, Speaker on United Methodist Polity, Boston University
- ❖ 2019 Michigan-area School for Pastoral Ministry: Streams of Healing Waters (preacher and presenter)
- ❖ 2019 Ethnic Young Adult's Gathering (preacher and presenter)
- ❖ 2019 NEXUS Convocation, "Love Resurrected" (preacher and workshop leader)
- ❖ 2019 Speaker Michigan MFSA, "Just, Compassionate, Inclusive: Future of Michigan Methodism" event
- ❖ 2019 and 2016 Pre-General Conference Briefings (panelist and presenter)
- ❖ 2018 East Ohio Annual Conference RMN/MFSA Gathering (preacher and workshop leader)
- ❖ 2018 School for Congregational Development (preacher and workshop leader)
- ❖ Presenter at GBCS and COSROW board meetings, Black Clergy Women's annual meeting, and BMCR
- ❖ United Women of Faith (formerly UMW) Worldwide Assemblies, district and annual conference meetings, including School for Christian Mission (presenter, preacher)
- ❖ Annual Conference and jurisdictional Commission on Religion and Race events/Beyond the Divide (presenter, preacher)

Ecumenical Church Experience:

- ❖ 2019 presenter for ELCA Church Council
- ❖ Presenter and preacher for 2019 British Methodist Church Council
- ❖ Served as a speaker for ecumenical and interfaith events in my community, including as a presenter at the *Beyond Co-existence 8th Interfaith Dialogue Series: Women of Faith, the Evolution of Women's Roles Within Religious Communities*.

My background is ecumenical. I grew up Baptist, engaged in urban ministry in the AME church where I worked with young girls as part of the *Ten Point Coalition*, an ecumenical anti-violence ministry. I helped develop a ministry called "Do the Write Thing," in which I used my love for poetry and writing to minister to teenage girls involved in gangs or at risk for gang involvement.

Community Service Activity:

1. Current:

- ❖ Alumni Board of Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary
- ❖ For the past 28 years I have worked with people in recovery from addictions.

2. Previous:

- ❖ Speaker for the 2020 Sustainability Consortium Summit on Leadership
- ❖ Speaker at 2018 East Lansing High School interfaith baccalaureate service
- ❖ Regularly advocated for issues of justice in our community, including the Snyder administration's initiative on violence and policing in urban areas and efforts to address the water crisis in Flint, MI
- ❖ Volunteered at my children's schools

Publications, Awards, Honors:

Awards/Honors:

- ❖ 2019 keynote speaker for Anna Howard Shaw Lecture Series at Boston University
- ❖ 2018 Michigan Annual Conference Preacher
- ❖ West Michigan Annual Conference Peace Sermon of the Year Award

Publications:

- ❖ "Reflections on Leadership" with Eric Martin, five-part series on adaptive leadership, published by Connectional Table, Emerging Methodism website, 2019.
- ❖ "Women of Word Poetry and Power" blog, published by the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, March 31, 2014.
- ❖ "Why I Choose to Be United Methodist Today," blog post for *About the Connection*, published by the Connectional Table, March, 11, 2013.
- ❖ "No Excuses," *Circuit Rider* (Call to Action Issue, 2012)

Special Interests and/or Hobbies:

I like working out and taking long walks. I garden (flowers). I enjoy reading and writing (poetry, short fiction, and creative nonfiction). I enjoy deep and engaging conversation. I love dance, music and theater and can spend hours in an art museum or botanical garden. I also love to travel and like to explore cities. I love dogs. We have a German Shephard named Kylo, and I enjoy making homemade dog treats for him. I enjoy attending my children's sporting events (soccer, basketball, track), and I love going to a pro-basketball game every now and then.

Faith and Leadership

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

The church is the body of Christ sent into the world to be the hands and heart of Christ. It is the sacramental representation of Christ present in the world through mission--seeking the transformation of lives and of communities. In and through the church, Christ is in the world as one who serves.

In a sacramental and mystical sense, the church is the broken body of Christ. We re-member and re-present this every time we commune together. In the same way that Christ's body was broken, we can be broken as individuals and as a community. Through the sacrament, we become whole.

The church, as Christ's sacramental body, has as its mission addressing the world's brokenness. The church is called to seek the healing of the world and to bring wholeness to individuals and communities. The church does this by bringing individuals into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ and into loving community with each other, then teaching the love of God and of neighbor as self.

In this sense, the church is called to be *beloved community*. The church is its truest and best self when it reaches across boundaries and breaks down dividing walls to bring about beloved community. This means bringing about reconciliation and healing by bringing people to God in Christ, to the restoration of their best selves, and into community with others.

Share Your Vision for The United Methodist Church:

I envision a United Methodist Church that fully claims its identity as a church that centers grace. This is a church that is open and inclusive of all people. It is a church that addresses racism in the church and in society, and actively seeks reconciliation, healing and justice for its LGBTQIA+ children. Such a church approaches ministry with an outward-facing and invitational love.

I also envision a worldwide United Methodist Church that is autonomous in governance, contextual in ministry, and connected in mission. Such a church would expand regional governance as a way of moving away from relationship structures born of colonialism. Such a church would recognize and respect contextual realities while shaping equitable structures for decision making. This would mean increasing regional autonomy while remaining connected through ministry partnerships and through the continued sharing of resources in ways that are equitable and that recognize historic oppressions.

This also is a church that is thriving and innovating, while at the same time offering stability, grounded in community, human decency, and the maintenance of norms. This is a church that is on the cutting edge of innovation, especially at the annual conference and local church level, while at the same time honoring the value of its institutional witness. Indeed, the institutional witness of The United Methodist Church, grounded in our *Social Principles*, is vital at a time when societies are moving toward authoritarianism and the normalizing of division and violence.

I often think of our concerns about shrinking resources and the loss of churches and the narratives of scarcity and decline that we sometimes rehearse among ourselves. And what I come to time and again is that the needs of the world and the power of who and whose we are have never changed. The world is still in need of Christ's redeeming love. The world is still in need of the transformative and healing work of God's Spirit. And God still calls us to God's mission of redemption, healing, and transformation in the world, despite our size.

Therefore, we must claim a narrative of hope and agency, because Christ still redeems us and claims and calls us as his disciples. God still sends the Holy Spirit to equip and empower us for God's mission, no matter what our balance sheets may say. None of our supposed limitations now or in the

future can limit what God can and is doing, in and through The United Methodist Church. I envision a church that grabs hold of that vision and gets busy.

Describe Your Concept and Style of Leadership:

We are in a time of remarkable anxiety, uncertainty and flux. To thrive, we must build our capacity to adapt to a constantly changing environment and be willing to experiment our way to innovation. This requires leaders who are theologically reflective, spiritually open, creative, collaborative, and unafraid to try new things. They must be comfortable with ambiguity and tension and able to effectively invite others into the messiness of the creative process.

Such leaders must have a high degree of spiritual and emotional intelligence, and be able to self-regulate and connect with others in ways that keep the tension of change within tolerable limits. These leaders must communicate urgency and, at the same time, project a non-anxious presence.

I believe this kind of leadership begins with self. To lead in ways that are spiritually grounded and healthy, we must manage ourselves, care for ourselves and deal with our own issues. From healthy and spiritually grounded selves comes healthy relationships, the very foundation of effective leadership.

I am a relational, collaborative and innovative leader who makes my own physical, emotional and spiritual health a priority. I am a visionary who is mission-directed and willing to experiment. I believe in surrounding myself with strong leaders, then equipping and allowing them to lead. I enjoy leading with people who are open to the creative movement of the Spirit, and I enjoy mentoring and developing new leaders.

I believe one can lead from the center or from the margins, and that leadership does not require position or authority. Leadership is an action and a way of life that only needs the power of the Holy Spirit, a vision of the coming "*kingdom*" of God, and the willingness of the leader to risk.

Describe Your Gifts and Graces:

- ❖ I am disciplined in my spiritual practices, including study, fasting, worship, giving, fellowship, and sabbath. I have a consistent prayer life as my bedrock.
- ❖ I have been, and am, a consistent and passionate voice for justice and inclusion for all people. I take seriously the call of the Gospel to care for the "least of these" as we would for Christ himself.
- ❖ I am a strategic thinker and visionary with a passion for the health and vitality of the worldwide United Methodist Church. I bring creativity, passion, and an openness to the Spirit's leading to my work. I enjoy experimenting on the way to innovation.
- ❖ I am a values-centered and effective administrator who can move projects to completion while working to surface values and center the mission. I take initiative and bring urgency to change.
- ❖ I am a reconciler. I hold strong convictions but am able to listen respectfully to others and bring people with divergent viewpoints together. I also am relational and collaborative. Other leaders want to join me in leadership.
- ❖ I know how to help people grieve, and I believe that one of the key challenges to helping facilitate change is knowing how to walk people through the grief involved with change.
- ❖ I communicate effectively through my speaking and writing. I am authentic, relatable, and can inspire with hope.
- ❖ I have experience with issues related to the world-wide United Methodist Church.

- ❖ I am teachable. Throughout my ministry, I have actively sought out mentors and have made theological reflection on my ministry and life a regular practice.
- ❖ I have disciplined and consistent practices of self-care. I am resilient but don't shy away from asking for help.
- ❖ I love deeply and am deeply loved by family and friends. I have a strong support network.

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

A call to the episcopacy is a call to the spiritual leadership of the worldwide church and contextual leadership within an annual conference. Given where we are currently in The United Methodist Church, that means a clear vision for the church that is emerging and of the mission to which God is calling us anew.

I respond to God's call with a visionary spirit and a pastor's heart. I bring a commitment to pour myself out for Christ, to surrender my life and gifts to the movement and guidance of the Holy Spirit, and to orient my ministry toward bringing about God's "*kingdom*." My commitment is grounded in Wesley's covenant prayer: "*I am no longer my own, but thine...I freely and heartily yield all things to thy pleasure and disposal.*"

This has been my stance before God throughout my ministry and as I have experienced a call to the episcopacy. That sense of call recently has been affirmed by the Michigan Annual Conference, through its endorsement. God has prepared me for the role in a variety of ways:

God has given me an understanding of the worldwide church.

Ten years in leadership at the Connectional Table (CT), first as a board member and now as its chief executive, has helped me understand the complexities of our worldwide church and nurture relationships across our global connection. I have provided leadership for the Connectional Table in finding innovative ways to live into our worldwide nature more effectively. For instance, I have provided leadership in developing proposals for regionalization and led the CT in affirming the Christmas Covenant.

God has given me a clear vision for the church and the ability to inspire with hope.

I have a vision of an inclusive, vital, relevant, and innovative worldwide church living out its mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. To realize that vision, an episcopal leader must inspire other leaders to lead with hope. Throughout my ministry, I have actively nurtured the leadership of both laity and clergy. As a former lay leader of one of my churches said,

"...leaders ask [Kennetha] to lead...She motivates and inspires people, and she articulates Christian values as a reconciler. For these and other reasons people like to work with her on difficult tasks."-- Don Jost, East Lansing University UMC

God has prepared me to lead change.

Our worldwide church is in the midst of massive change. As we envision a different kind of future, there will be more change to come. As a local church pastor, superintendent, and in my CT role, I have had many opportunities to lead innovation and build capacity to adapt. I have learned how to help people grapple with the grief and loss associated with change.

In addition, I am an effective and values-centered administrator, with a deep understanding of United Methodist polity. I can project calm and provide clear direction in the midst of uncertainty and have a track record of moving organizational systems forward. This has been most

evident in my leadership in developing new approaches to allocating our quadrennial denominational budget.

God has given me a clear sense of identity and of the importance of articulating identity.

I understand, from family and organizational systems work, the importance of clear self-definition. I have developed the ability to communicate clearly who I am and where I stand on issues, while reaching across divides and staying connected with those whose opinions differ from my own--for instance, in my leadership of a legislative subcommittee of the 2012 General Conference that reached consensus on reproductive rights.

I also have led The United Methodist Church in articulating its identity through the design and development of the [2021 State of the Church Report](#) and the Connectional Table's project on [Imagining the Future](#), which explores identity, mission, vision and connectionalism. In addition, my work with United Methodist Communications to promote the [#BeUMC](#) campaign has highlighted the importance of clear identity as a precursor to shaping vision.

God has called me to place justice, equity and inclusion at the center.

I envision a United Methodist Church in which all people are fully included in its life and ministry, including our LGBTQIA+ siblings. I am committed to dismantling racism and all "isms" that stand in the way of the realization of God's "kingdom." I believe that justice, equity and inclusion must be our prophetic witness to the world. As such, I have a long track record of leadership in justice-related ministries at the local church, annual conference and general church levels and am a Michigan Annual Conference Peace Sermon of the Year awardee.

God has prepared me to address trauma.

I believe that we are experiencing complex trauma on both the individual and institutional levels. Consider just the past two years: a global pandemic that has killed millions; racial violence; the tragedies in Uvalde and Buffalo and other incidences of gun violence; natural disasters; division and strife within nations, especially the United States; significant and disruptive divisions within our own church; and a war in Europe. God has equipped me to deal with trauma by giving me a listening ear, a reconciling spirit, and solid spiritual grounding through a disciplined spiritual life. God has also blessed me with consistent practices of self-care. As well, I have done continuing education in trauma-informed ministry and understand the dynamics of trauma.

I believe that I have been called to this role for this time in the life of The United Methodist Church. I look forward to the opportunity to offer myself fully to the discernment of my lay and clergy colleagues in the North Central Jurisdiction. My prayer is that we would allow the full reign of God's Spirit in that process.

Endorsements:

- [The 2022 Michigan Annual Conference](#)
- [Michigan Conference Delegation to General and Jurisdictional Conference](#)
- MARCHA (*Methodist Associated Representing the Cause Hispanic/Latino American*)

Episcopal Nominee Information
for
Rev. Dr. Curtis Brown



Name: Curtis Brown

Conference: Illinois Great Rivers

Street/PO Box Address: 1925 S. Bates Ave.

City/State/Zip: Springfield, IL 62704

Telephone: 774-279-1537

Fax: n/a

Email: revcurtisbrown@gmail.com

Current Appointment: Director of Connectional Ministries, Illinois Great Rivers Conference

Family: I'm married to Rev. Meredith Manning Brown. I have one daughter in college and one in high school. I also live with a cat named Splat

Background and Experience:

Formal Education and Significant Continuing Education:

- Doctor of Ministry, Community Organizing, Garrett Evangelical Seminary, 2018
- Master of Divinity, Boston University School of Theology, 1996
- Bachelor of Arts, University of Evansville, 1993
- Certified New Church Coach, Path 1 Discipleship Ministries
- Certified Leader, Disciple Bible Study
- Certified Trainer, Creating Congregational Cultures of Generosity, Lake Institute on Philanthropy
- Certified Coach Trainer, Natural Church Development

Ordination Dates and Conference of Which You Were a Member:

- Transferred Full Member in Order of Elder, Illinois Great Rivers, 2021
- Full Member in the Order of Elder, New England Conference, 2004
- Probationary Deacon, New England Conference, 1998
- Licensed Local Pastor, New England Conference, 1996
- Certified Candidate for Ministry, Southern Illinois Conference, 1996

Previous Work Experiences and Pastoral Appointments:

- Illinois Great Rivers Conference: Director of Connectional Ministries
- Discipleship Ministries: Path 1 New Church Strategist
- Pacific Northwest Conference: Director of Faith Community Development
- New England Conference: Director of Congregational Development
- First UMC, Framingham MA: Senior Pastor
- Wellspring UMC, Shrewsbury MA: Associate Pastor for Evangelism
- First UMC, Westborough MA: Associate Pastor, Planting Pastor
- Wakefield-Lynnfield UMC, Wakefield MA: Interim Pastor
- Wakefield-Lynnfield UMC, Wakefield MA: Youth Minister
- Scarritt-Bennett Center, Nashville TN: Interpretive Organic Gardener
- Parkway UMC, Milton MA: Student Intern Pastor
- Tomahawk UMC, Tomahawk WI: Campground Minister
- St. Paul's UCC, Evansville, IN: Youth Director
- First UMC: Metropolis IL: Interim Youth Minister
- First UMC, Carmi, IL: Youth Minister

Connectional and Ecumenical Church Experiences:

3. Current:

- North Central Jurisdiction Mission Council
- Extended Cabinet Illinois Great Rivers Conference
- Co-Chair, Illinois Great Rivers Connectional Table
- Chair, Illinois Great Rivers Sessions Committee
- "Our Conference, Our Kids" Fundraising Committee
- Association of Directors of Connectional Ministries
- Youth Sunday School Class Leader, Douglas Avenue UMC

4. Previous:

- United Methodist School of Congregational Development Planning Team
- Network of United Methodist Congregational Developers
- Western Jurisdiction Congregational Development Coordinator
- Path1 New Church Starts Discipleship Ministries Advisory Board
- Core Staff, Bishop Jack & Marjorie Tuell Center for Leadership Excellence
- Vice President, New England United Methodist Federal Credit Union
- Chair, New England Conference New Church Starts Committee
- New England Conference Commission on the Status and Role of Women
- Core Launch Team & Marketing Coordinator, Evergreen UMC
- Founder & Consultant, www.WorshipMonkey.org (worship design consulting)
- Past President, Boston University Theological Students Association
- Jr. High & High School Church Camp Counselor and Mission Trip leader, various sites in Illinois, Massachusetts & Washington
- President, East St. Louis District United Methodist Youth Council

Community Service Activity:

3. Current:

- Member, Band Parents Association Springfield High School

- Volunteer, Springfield High School Theater Program
- Member, Washington Trails Association
- Member, Appalachian Mountain Club
- Member, Cahokia Mounds Society

4. Previous:

- Volunteer, Thurston County Food Bank
- Volunteer, South Sound Reading Foundation
- Volunteer, South Puget Sound Habitat for Humanity
- Girls Volleyball Coach, South Sound YMCA
- Girls Basketball Coach, South Sound YMCA
- Adult Scout Leader, Girl Scouts of Western Washington
- Adult Scout Leader, Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts
- Eagle Scout, Boy Scouts of America

Publications, Awards, Honors:

- Author, *Ready, Set, Plant: The Why and How of Starting New Churches* (Nashville TN: Discipleship Resources, 2021)
- Author, “First Twelve” New Faith Community Planting Training
- Author, “What is a New Faith Community” Path 1 Resource
- Author, “Beta Church Vitality Process” Pacific Northwest Conference
- Keynote Speaker, Pacific Northwest Youth CONVO
- Keynote Speaker, Trailhead New Church Planter Training
- Keynote Speaker, Step One New Church Planter Training
- Presenter, United Methodist School of Congregational Development
- Presenter, United Methodist Church Planters Gathering
- Presenter, North Central Jurisdiction New Pathways Training
- Presenter, Southeastern Jurisdiction New Pathways Training
- Presenter, Route 122 Congregational Vitality Event
- Presenter, New England School of Congregational Development

Special Interests and/or Hobbies:

- Backpacking and Hiking
- Playing Guitar
- Honda Cub & Passport Motorbike Restoration
- Pre-Columbian Native American Archeology

Faith and Leadership

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

I became a Christian through the love and grace of Christ I experienced embodied in the people of Union United Methodist Church in Belleville, Illinois. They weren't perfect people, but they displayed to me the perfect love of God. When I began to feel a call into ministry, I started to look around and explore how I could help others find the grace that I had found. That search led me back to the local church itself. I believe that there is nothing more powerful in the lives of people or communities than a vital congregation doing God's work in meaningful ways. I believe in the

power of local churches to do amazing works of power and love.

In broad terms, the Church is the body of Christ, the community of believers who are dedicated to becoming more like Christ and living for Christ's mission and purpose in the world. This identity is expressed in the mission of The United Methodist Church: "to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." The Church is to multiply new disciples through evangelism and witness, and it is to help those disciples grow in faith and maturity through spiritual practice and continuous encounters with God's grace. Disciples, however, don't exist just for their own discipleship. Instead, they exist to follow after Jesus in transforming this world through love, justice, holiness, compassion, mercy, and peace-making. The Church multiplies disciples who, in turn, multiply grace by seeking the realization of God's vision of a renewed creation. In the Wesleyan tradition, we have described this as the two-fold mission of personal piety and social holiness.

Share Your Vision for The United Methodist Church:

I see a wonderful and powerful future for The United Methodist Church. I know that there are loud voices decrying the future of our denomination and resigning it to the past's heap of failed religious organizations. However, I don't see it that way. We have our troubles, some of which will take a great effort to overcome, but if The United Methodist Church did not exist in this world, I believe we would desire to create something very much like it. Even with its obvious flaws, The United Methodist Church still does some amazing and Spirit-filled work for the mission of Christ, and it has the capacity for even more. I believe that our current conflict is the birth-pangs of something new being born. We don't fully know what denominational forms are being birthed, but I am hopeful for what God can work in our midst.

I see a future for The United Methodist Church that is inclusive of all peoples and deeply engaged in partnership with the communities it serves. When the global church sees all people as worthy of full involvement in the Gospel, it must confront all of its internalized barriers to evangelism, especially its racism, sexism, nationalism, and heterosexism. In The United Methodist Church in the United States, our easy assimilation of white privilege, xenophobia, misogyny, and homophobia are scandalously self-imposed limits on our witness to a radically loving God. We must confront these limits and their intersections with all of the ways our society seeks to divide and isolate some peoples from the whole people of God. I believe this begins with personal and institutional commitments to intersectional justice and congregational commitments to engaged service and witness with the actual people God has placed within their communities.

I see a future for The United Methodist Church that is innovative and willing to take risks in adapting to the rapidly changing societies and cultures that it inhabits. The "one size fits all" standardized methods of previous generations have already failed. In their place, we have seen the emergence of contextually relevant, demographically specific, methodologically innovative, continuously adaptive congregations across the world. Our denominational systems and structures have too often seen these new forms of church as "weird" or unusual special cases, but they are the Holy Spirit's testimony to the future of our church and, as such, provide us a glimpse of a vital future for our congregations and denomination. In order to follow the Spirit's lead, we must turn our faces away from staring backwards at our past with its nostalgic stories of former glories and grief at what has been lost. Instead, we must look to our future as glimpsed in the eyes of emerging leaders who see the power and hope that our church can offer the world. More than just permission to break with traditions, these leaders need us to fundamentally transform our denomination so that The United Methodist Church systemically embraces innovation, adaptation, and risk as normative at every level.

I see a victorious future for The United Methodist Church. I have carried with me for many years a conversation with a young leader in our church. We were talking about their future, and they shared honestly about their fears and reservations about our denomination. The conversation concluded with this simple statement, “Curtis, I’m tired of being on a losing team.” In the United States, our denomination is obsessed with telling stories of our losses. These stories cloud our institutional atmosphere and keep us from clearly seeing the victories Christ is winning all around us. I see the amazing things that God is doing in individuals, communities, and nations through United Methodists around the world, even in the United States. I see a future filled with stories of God’s victories, but we have to do a better job celebrating these stories. I see a future filled with testimony to God’s daily triumphs in our churches instead of obituaries recording the losses of our institutional past.

Describe Your Concept and Style of Leadership:

I believe that leadership is a relationship between the leader and the led. As such, I seek to be engaged and involved collaboratively with those whom I am called to lead. Together, we form a leadership relationship that is mutually beneficial and serves our common mission. This requires adaptivity, as different individuals and cultures have different expectations and needs from their leaders. Some people and situations require leaders who are more positional and formal, while sometimes familiarity and casual leadership is more contextually appropriate. As a leader, I try to meet people where they are in order to foster progress in our mutual aims.

In practice, the word that comes up a lot from people I’ve worked with in describing my leadership has been “fun.” I don’t believe that this is a frivolous or incidental description. For me, this indicates that the teams I’ve led feel free and empowered in our work, even when it has been difficult or trying. We have seen each other as real and whole people, and we have joined together fully to support and serve one another in our tasks. I take this description as a great compliment.

I am a risk-taking leader, with a high threshold for experimentation and failure. I have a track record of trying new things, evaluating their effectiveness, improving on their successes, or moving past their failures without ascribing guilt or shame. I believe in exploring options and seeking multiple contingencies, even if they call into question current practices or long-held traditions. I am a thoughtful and strategic leader, who values daring goals and specific plans of action. I hold myself to a high standard of execution and excellence, and I ask the same of those on my teams. I am a curious leader, who wants to understand people and their goals. Using my experience as a trained leadership coach, I have learned to ask more questions than to offer directions. Often powerful questions will help people to discover for themselves a better way forward, and they are always more motivated to implement their own plans than a hierarchical directive.

Finally, I believe in bold and courageous leadership. As a leader, I have seen my teams take the greatest risks and achieve the biggest goals when I have been appropriately vulnerable, fully sharing in their risks and challenges. I believe in looking clearly at challenges, describing them plainly, and honestly assessing resources. Jesus warns about trying to build a tower without counting the available amount of construction materials or going to war without assessing your opponent. Courageous leadership is not Pollyannaish, especially when it comes to the potential costs or risks. When we see together the risks and opportunities, we can clearly and courageously step out in faith, knowing what is within our capacities and what we hope God will provide.

Describe Your Gifts and Graces:

As a leader, I most often rely on the gift of strategic vision. I know this isn't one of the spiritual gifts enumerated by Paul, but I understand it as a grace from God that has blessed my life. Strategic vision is the ability to see a different future and build a plan to move from a current situation into that future. This gift shows up in my top five Clifton Strengths: Strategic, Achiever, Ideation, Learner, Analytical. It has been especially helpful in leading local church, annual conference, and general agency teams into greater excellence, but I use it in every part of my life, from planning backpacking trips to growing in my practice of spiritual disciplines. I also use the gift of strategic vision to help me connect and inspire people. In times of personal or organizational transition, such as the reordering we are experiencing in The United Methodist Church, people long for a vision of a better future, and they will rally around an achievable plan that will help to get them to that future.

I have a high capacity for execution and personal discipline. I tend to work quickly through tasks, accomplishing a lot in a relatively brief amount of time. I can keep multiple projects in my mind, and I understand complex systems of organization and relationships. I am deeply curious about people, and I am always seeking to better understand the people with whom I am serving. This curiosity helps me to build richer relationships and helps our teams to better engage our shared mission. For me, this curiosity also leads into empathy, which helps me to be more pastoral and caring with those around me.

I have a deep knowledge of innovation and emerging forms of church. I have spent the last two decades working with ecclesiastical entrepreneurs in The United Methodist Church, and I have been personally involved in starting three new churches. I understand the methods and mindsets necessary to innovate new faith communities, and I have personal and direct experience with the necessary sacrifices and costs required in leading a new expression of church. The United Methodist Church must be remade by refocusing on Christ's risky and world-changing evangelistic mission if it hopes to effectively reach new generations. I believe that I have some of the necessary experience and knowledge to help lead in that task.

Finally, I think the greatest gift that I bring is that I know who I am. Leading in an anxious organization, like The United Methodist Church, is full of traps and pressures designed to sabotage a leader's self-understanding. I have seen how tempting it is to cave in to organizational and relational pressure that prefers the uncomfortable present to the risky but preferable future. It is tempting for leaders to forget their values in the face of complex and difficult situations. When I have faced similar situations, I have relied on my core convictions and knowledge of what I most value: I am a beloved child of God, graced with new life by Christ, and partnered with the Holy Spirit in welcoming all creation into this same self-conception. When I have not lived according to these values, I believe I have honestly owned up to my failings, and I have sought the courage to repent and renew my commitment to try again.

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

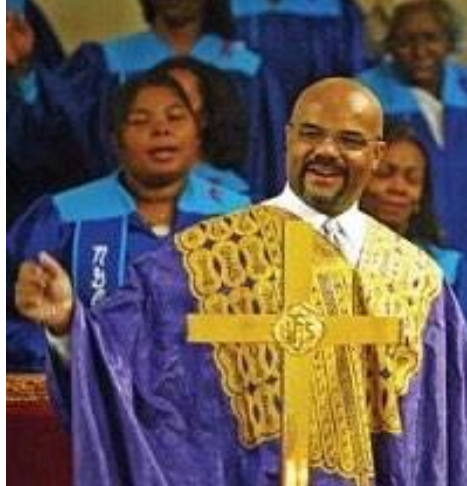
As I have prayed and sought to discern God's calling, I keep returning to the fact that I am an unlikely candidate for Bishop. Although I have worked with many Bishops, Superintendents, and Cabinets in helping to select and supervise pastors in special appointments, I have not been a District Superintendent myself. In the North Central Jurisdiction, I believe the last person to be elected as a Bishop without being a Superintendent was Woodie White. Although I grew up in Illinois, served congregations in Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin, taught and consulted throughout

the North Central Jurisdiction, and currently live and serve in The Illinois Great Rivers Conference, I have until 2021 been a clergy member of the New England Conference. The last person to be elected as a Bishop across jurisdictional boundaries was Leontine Kelly. I have personally known both Bishop White and Bishop Kelly, and they are giants of the church, whereas I am merely a very tall person. Reflecting on their ministries fills me with a deep sense of “imposter syndrome,” and I wonder if I can live up to the standard of spiritual leadership I have seen in them.

However, as I have reached out to trusted friends and mentors, they have reminded me that this is a unique moment in the life of our church that calls for unlikely leaders. I have always taken to heart the words from Wesley’s covenant prayer, especially the phrase, “put me to what thou wilt.” In my prayers, I have envisioned my life as an offering, laid upon the celestial altar of God, for God to use however God sees helpful. Through my prayers and discernment partners, I have come to see that my own self-doubts should not keep me from offering myself and my leadership in any way that God, through the discernment of the church, should see fit.

I believe that our denomination is at a critical inflection point, where we can turn our journey toward a renewed future or be lost in the current storm of denominational division and discord. I believe that God has prepared me through gifts, experience, and relationships with a leadership perspective that is useful and necessary for this time of transition. I believe that I can effectively use these gifts through the office of a Bishop in The United Methodist Church to further Christ’s mission in the world. And so, with these beliefs, I offer myself to the discernment of the delegates for consideration as an episcopal candidate.

Episcopal Nominee Information for Rev. Jacques A. Conway



Name: Jacques A. Conway (him/he/his)

Conference: Northern Illinois

Street/PO Box Address: 211 N. Grove Ave.

City/State/Zip: Oak Park, IL 60302

Telephone: (708)699-5801

Email: jconway@umcnic.org

Current Appointment: District Superintendent; Lake South District

Family: I have been married to my high school sweetheart, [LaMenta Conway, MD](#), for 38 years. Together we have 3 children Christian (Mark), Caleb, and Corey. Additionally, we have 2 grand puppies affectionally called Rainbow and Oso.

Background and Experience

Formal education (please also include significant Continuing Education):

Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, Rochester, N.Y., D. Min Program (Thesis in progress) (2022)

Princeton Theological Seminary, Black Theology & Leadership Institute (2017)

Loyola University Chicago, MBA Certificate (2010)

Northwestern University School of Staff & Command (2002)

Chicago Theological Seminary, Master of Divinity (1995)

Loyola University Chicago, Bachelor's Degree (1985)

Chicago Police Academy (1984)

Ordination Dates and Conferences of Which You Were a Member:

Probationary Deacon, Northern Illinois Conference (1996)
Elder, Northern Illinois Conference (1999)

Previous Work Experiences and Pastoral Appointments:

[Oak Park Police Department, Oak Park, IL, Retired Senior Patrol & Community Police Sergeant \(1984-2006\)](#)

Park National Bank, Vice President Community Development & Engagement (2006-2009)
Teamwork Englewood, Founding Board Member & Executive Director (2009-2012)
Euclid Avenue United Methodist Church, Oak Park, IL – Associate Pastor (1993-1995)
Chris/Greater Englewood Parish United Methodist Church, Chicago, IL – Local Pastor (1995-2003)
Neighborhood United Methodist Church, Maywood, IL – Elder (2003-2016)
St. Matthew United Methodist Church, Chicago, IL – Elder (2013-2016)
Chicago Southern/Lake South District, Northern Illinois Conference – District Superintendent (2016-Present)

Service in Chaplaincy:

Oak Park Police Department, Oak Park, IL – Founder, Chaplaincy Program (1995-2020)
Fraternal Order of Police, State Lodge, IL – (1998-Present)
United States Secret Service (2020-Present)

Connectional and Ecumenical Church Experience:

[Oak Park River Forest High School District 200, Board President Elect \(2002-2010\)](#)
[NUMC Afterschool Tutoring Program \(2003–2016\)](#)

Chair, Northwestern District Committee of Ordained Ministry, Member (2012-2016)
Cabinet Member, Conference Council Finance & Administration (2018-2020)
Annual Conference Shepherding Team 2016-Present
Kids Above All, Executive Board Member (2016-Present)
[I AM ABEL](#), Executive Board Member (2015-Present)
[Christ The King Jesuit High School](#), Executive Board Member (2015-2021)
Live Free Chicago, Executive Board Member (2014-Present)
Leaders Network, Executive Board Member (2015-Present)
West Suburban Journal Weekly, Columnist and Advisory Board Member (2006 – 2017)

Emeritus Appointments:

Illinois Juvenile Officers Association International Conference of Police Chaplains
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.
Black Methodists for Church Renewal

Special Honors:

De Lasalle High School African American of the Year (2002)
Featured in the following print and television media: Chicago Sun-Times, Chicago Tribune, New York Times, People Magazine, Ebony, Oak Leaves, Forest Park Review, [Wednesday Journal](#), West Suburban Journal, and appearances on [Fox News National Network](#) and the Lifetime Network.

Special Interests and/or Hobbies:

Antique vehicles
Foreign Travel, having visited 23 countries and 5 continents.
Frequenting baseball stadium, having visited 24 out of 30 Major League Baseball stadiums across the U.S.

FAITH & LEADERSHIP

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

The Church is called into being by the Father “who so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16). I understand, the nature of the church is the well-spring of God’s Eternal Word and the Holy Spirit. The church belongs to God, it is God’s gift, and cannot exist by itself or for itself.

The mission of the church is the exercise of faith by the conviction of the Holy Spirit, that serves to evangelize the inclusive love of God for all people. Equally importantly, beyond ministering to the spiritual needs of people, faith (or mission) work emphasizes compassion in action concerning the least’s immediate and practical needs.

John Wesley best describes the Church mission and purpose for God’s disciples in the following statement ; “Do you not know that God entrusted you with that money (all above what buys necessities for your families) to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to help the stranger, the widow, the fatherless; and, indeed, as far as it will go, to relieve the wants of all mankind? How can you, how dare you, defraud the Lord, by applying it to any other purpose?”

I glean from Wesley’s remarks, the Church is not solely the sum of believers in communion with God, nor is it partially the mutual communion of individual believers among themselves. The Church is common partaking, by people from all statuses, races, and genders in the life of God (2 Pet 1:4), who as Trinity is the source and focus of all communions. Thus, the nature and mission of the Church is both a divine and a human reality – a dichotomy of spirituality and acts of love.

Share Your Vision for The United Methodist Church:

I share the same clarity of vision for the United Methodist Church as our Founder, John Wesley, that the church is not a destination, a pew, or a structure; it’s a vehicle of faith, beyond the four walls, that when used to share the inclusive love of God for all people will infuse the hearts of mankind with the sense of hope, renewal, and the Divine presence of God.

The vision for the church need not be adjusted, rather with God’s guidance we should adjust our methods to realign with our vision.

There is an obvious journey still taking place within the Methodist church, not unlike the unorthodox shift in 1700s taking God’s word in all its form from the pulpit to the open air; it is the exodus of our generation. We are leaving the slave plains of our mental captivity. We have turned over our brick and mortar, and we are answering the call to follow God; (Mark 16:15) And he said unto them, go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation.

With a unified vision, we must reignite the movement by creating and aligning new strategies that address the ever-changing needs of contemporary society. The issues of racial equity and social justice are important issues that remain at the core of the Methodist movement. Partly, as result of the churches long standing commitment to eradicate institutional inequities, formidable grassroots movements armed with social media have sprung forth to include the Black Lives Matter, LBGTQ, Me Too, and Taking A Knee. Overlooked yet equally deserving are contemporary issues of segmented populations the church must plan to address or miss the mark.

Affordable housing, transportation, and the aging population are growing challenges that require immediate assessment, planning and outreach strategies. It is estimated that by 2030, nearly 20 percent of the population will be older than 65. By 2035, adults over 65 will outnumber children under 18. By 2050, there will be more than 1 million Americans older than 100. A priority currently on the forefront of municipal agencies across the regions is the condition of homeowners aging in their houses, which may no longer be appropriate for their needs, and having few available affordable options to downsize. In tackling this challenge, we must ask ourselves how the United Methodist Church could maximize investment properties currently underutilized, advance the ministry vision, and help meet the growing demands of people in need.

I firmly believe that creating a long-term organizational, communication and outreach strategic plan to act as a compass in the hands of current and future United Methodist Church theologians we set the church on an actionable path to successfully carry out its vision for generations to come.

We serve an omniscient God, who is capable of all things, and I believe that as we look to God and cast God-sized nets we (the Church) will reap God-sized returns.

Describe Your Concept and Style of Leadership:

I learned the fundamental concept of leadership from the teachings of God through His written Word. “Anyone who wants to be first, must be the very last and the servant of all (Mark 9:35).

I would describe my leadership style as Servant-minded. My journey of growing up in a close-knit family and church instilled in me a responsibility that has somewhat faded in today’s “Selfie” culture. I was raised in an environment that demonstrated serving other people, my father was in law enforcement and my mother retired a career nurse. The men and women in my extended family had a solid belief that caring for others was a “calling” in life. This belief followed me from childhood through adulthood.

Teachers and community leaders also helped shape the person I am today. I struggled with disciplinary actions throughout my Catholic grammar school years. I wasn’t until Mrs. Coleman, my 8th grade teacher, that my circumstances would improve. Ms. Coleman treated me with compassion and understanding as she worked to identify my problem. She found that my disciplinary actions were a direct result of my academic struggles. I was too embarrassed to seek help and I acted out of frustration. Ms. Coleman, like others, never gave up on me. She replaced punishment with encouragement, demeaning words with praise, and isolation with inclusion. Ms. Coleman’s Christ-like example of kindness and leadership made an indelible impression on my life.

As one of the first African American police officer added to the ranks of the Oak Park Police Department, I faced discrimination, exclusion, rejection, and inequality. Those experiences, coupled with racial tension I witnessed as a child growing up in the 60s, compelled me to be an ally for the oppressed and the rejected. The sting of isolation made me clamor for meaningful change – acceptance, love, inclusion, dignity and respect – for all people regardless of race or gender.

Servant leadership has opened doors for me to model good behavior. Build leaders. Be an ally for diverse communities. Listen and learn. Speak out against inequality. And most importantly, it’s taught me to change the conversation away from our differences to our shared humanity because we were strongest when we work together.

Describe Your Gifts and Graces:

Bi-vocational

Became the youngest Oak Park, IL police officer promoted to the rank of Sergeant, and first African American to retire from the department.

Founded the Oak Park Explorers, a program for high school youth to expose and prepare participants for a career in law enforcement. The co-ed program opened the door for youth to develop relationships with local officers and begin careers in public safety. I mentored more than 100 youth during the program. The program introduced participants to college campuses across the country. 100 percent of participants graduated and went on to college.

As a member of the CeaseFire organization for violence prevention, I applied prevention, intervention and community mobilization strategies that helped reduced shooting in the Chicagoland area.

Vision

Elected President of Oak Park River Forest High School, I led the initiative to change how the school managed student disciplinary problems, as a result disciplinary actions decreased by 15 percent. I also implemented police reinforcement inside of the school, which helped to forge positive relationships between the students and local police officers helping to negate the notion 'all police are bad'.

Appointed by Bishop Sally Dyck, to the position of District Superintendent of the Chicago Southern District, 2016 to present, while serving as a bi-vocational minister throughout my career. In this capacity, with God's grace, I led the following initiatives:

- Started an urban camp for at-risk youth. The camp exposed participants to new experiences, people, and places and enriched the lives of participants. In all, the camp has served more than 200 students.
- In collaboration with district clergy and laity started a camp dedicated to uplifting youth. *A Day In The Country* youth camp took kids from the inner city to the country side. The purpose of the program served to enrichment, whereby disadvantaged youth were exposed to different cultures, surroundings, and experiences.
- Developed annual leadership training for clergy and laity on the subjects' finances, personal health, and organizational management. Additionally, incorporated annual pastoral training in the areas of Medicare and housing. These training tools empowered clergy to provide useful information to their congregants.
- Through prayer and example, encouraged communion among clergy members including shared bible studies and fellowship.
- While serving as superintendent, I challenged the United Methodist Churches in the Chicago Southern District to develop an initiative outside of worship that would have an impact on youth, community, health, and education. As a result, we began the application process to become host to a center for education. Chicago Freedom School takes an innovative approach to civic engagement, leadership development, and movement building. Their programs, resources and trainings invite young people and adult allies to study the work of

past movements, deepen their understanding of current social problems, build new coalitions, and develop strategies for change. St. Mark United Methodist Church, Chicago, is one of two churches slated to host Chicago Freedom School. More recently, in 2022, our efforts secured \$350K in grants, renewable for 2 years, to benefit the St. Mark United Methodist Chicago Freedom School initiative.

- As Superintendent, I developed plans and led the initiative to start 3 new faith communities within the district. The faith communities consist of Ghanaian, Latino and African American groups. They are designed to meet the needs of the diverse growing populations, cultures, and increase discipleship within the region.
- I planned and led the effort to repurpose an underutilized church building, located in the Auburn Gresham community on the South Side of Chicago, into a performance and fine arts center. The center purposes to enrich youth and deter delinquency. Currently, I am working in collaboration with a community organization and several churches within the Conference to open a local thrift store on the South Side of Chicago. Staffed by volunteers from partner churches, the thrift store will serve the community, reduce waste, and better utilize church resources.

Stewardship & Leadership

I was appointed to 2 churches, one being St. Matthew United Methodist Church, a historical Lexington Conference congregation located in Chicago, and the other Neighborhood United Methodist Church, the oldest congregation in the Chicago western suburb of Maywood.

- I helped to revive the small and struggling congregation of St. Matthew UMC by developing a 3year strategic plan. The plan entailed revitalizing the church structure, increasing worship attendance and leverage church assets. To begin, I recruited mission teams from local churches to help with the beautification of the dilapidated building. Together we planted gardens, repaired bathrooms, painted walls and beautified the landscaping. Within my 3 years of stewardship, and help from God, the congregation membership and worship attendance increased by 30 percent.
- During my 3-year 2 Point Charge, I received the call to aid in any way possible racial reconciliation. I initiated a multiuse plan for the renovation of the St. Matthew church building. The church is located in an area once home to Cabrini Green, a government subsidized housing development known as the most dangerous public housing project in the country and comprised mainly of poor and low-income African Americans. In the mid-90s Cabrini residents in good standing were displaced from their homes to make way for new market rate properties. The demolition took place as a part of a push to abandon high-rise public housing in the hope that tenants struggling with crime and poverty would find more accommodating homes in mixed-income communities. But residents and experts alike found that in many cases, these new developments do not represent true integration. Rather, there is still an invisible divide, both cultural and socioeconomic, between public housing and market-rate residents.

The St. Matthew Church Development stands to bridge the integration gap. The plan, projected to cost \$102.5M, includes expanding the church building to accommodate commercial, residential affordable housing, parking, and worship space, with 25 percent of the 175 apartments allocated to affordable housing and 75 percent market.

The effort is an economic and social enterprise to move reconciliation along racial and socioeconomic lines. To accomplish this, the ground floor location will be accessible from the street where people can walk in and integrate and ultimately fellowship with one another.

- I worked in collaboration with Historic Greenstone United Methodist Church (led by a local pastor) and the Conference to obtain a landmark grant in the amount of \$1.08M, the largest grant awarded within the Conference.

Administration

- As the Vice President of Community Development for Park National Bank, I identified a community need for a quality high school to serve the area. I worked cross-denomination with the Jesuits to broker a \$2M interest free loan to help establish Christ The King Jesuit High School, which became the first predominantly African American Jesuit school in the country. I served on the board of Christ The King Jesuit for 6 years steering student recruiting, employment, and outreach efforts.

Inclusion

- During my role as Superintendent, I learned there had not been an African American man or woman ordained to Elder or Deacon in the Northern Illinois Conference in more than 10 years. To help lead the church toward a more inclusive reflection of God's people, God led me in recruiting a diverse pool of ministry of candidates currently in the process of joining the ministry within our Conference.

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

It was during a visit to a Methodist church in 1989 when I saw a pastor in my likeness that inspired within me the hope that I, too, could someday serve God's people. Growing up Catholic, I never saw an example of a man or woman of color leading God's people. I shared this revelation with my now wife who replied, "before you preach one sentence first learn to serve in the church".

I became a volunteer youth leader in 1992 for Rust Memorial Church. During this time, I witnessed an unspeakable tragedy that remains embedded with me to this day. A young and promising member of my youth group, LeMont Ford, was shot and killed. The senseless tragedy, committed by two gang members, was a case of mistaken identity. I was paralyzed with grief and hopelessness. While leaving the scene of the murder, I asked God why this promising, smart, college bound young man, active in the church had meet a violent end. I prayed and asked God to use me in a mighty way. God answered with such clarity, that shortly after the incident, while a full-time police officer, I entered seminary school full-time.

By and large, the things we see as police officers are not fun, exciting, or adrenaline-filled like in the television shows and movies. They are horrific and sad. Criminals are so desensitized to their actions that it reminds me of Jeremiah 17:9; because their hearts are wicked, they deceive themselves into thinking their actions are justified.

The day after seminary school graduation, I received a call from the District Superintendent. She called to appointment me to lead a church in Englewood, at the time Chicago's most crime infested neighborhood. When asked why I was chosen for the task she replied, "You can legally carry a gun and you won't be intimidated by the gang members. She added, "God called and equipped you to serve there."

With God's help, I began to make a positive difference in the lives of Englewood residents and the community. Worship attendance increased and the community programs were making an impact. Just when all seemed to be moving in God's direction, a church member's 8-yr-old child was shot and murdered in the alley of the church. My heart was absolutely shattered for the family and the church. I felt hopeless and lost. I prayed to God for strength and guidance. In like fashion to John Wesley, I held a public field sermon outside of Englewood Church. I emphatically called for a return to God's love, peace and restoration. I made clear on that day Englewood Church was neutral territory off limits to guns and violence. The shooting incident near the church was the first and last during my 7-yr term.

God answered the prayer of restoration. The congregation grew from 25 members when I started as pastor to 150 members each Sunday. My appointment at Englewood Church ended when after the district conference, I was replaced by a church elder assigned with consolidating 5-area churches into one, including Englewood. The consolidation effort was unsuccessful due to lack of resources and planning.

God used two tragedies to help guide my path in bi-vocational service as police officer and pastor to help influence the minds and touch the hearts of the hopeless and the wayward.

In my bi-vocational role, I have worn many hats. From guiding troubled youth to sitting on a local high school board, I'm always working with God's help to better the greater community. But it's also the spiritual work, comforting the men and women in blue, that has been a blessing for many. Delivering a death notification to a family is never easy, even when you are a police chaplain. The total sum of my 27 experiences in the ministry – planting seeds in the field, casting the vision, shepherding the flock, feeding God's hungry – has helped to lay the foundation for greater faith works within God's Kingdom.

Like the call to ministry, God's calling to the Episcopacy is a humbling and overwhelming journey. As I've shared with colleagues and conference leaders who've encouraged me to take the faith steps toward the Episcopacy, I'm filled with competing emotions of unworthiness and the unwavering devotion to die to self and expend myself to others.

I place my trust and candidacy for the Episcopacy in the Lord's hands, knowing He will open doors and guide my steps in growth, grace, and ministry.

**Episcopal Nominee Information
for
Reverend Cara E. Stultz Costello**



Name: Cara E. Stultz Costello (she/her/hers)

Conference: East Ohio

Street/PO Box Address: 816 Hillcrest Ave. NW

City/State/Zip: North Canton, Ohio 44720

Telephone: (330) 224-7107

Fax: N/A

Email: cstultzcostello@eocumc.com

Current Appointment: East Ohio Conference Superintendent, Tuscarawas District

Family: I am happily married to the Rev. Steve Stultz Costello. We are privileged to co-parent two children – Arthur Elijah “Eli” (20) and Atticus William “Atty” (17).

Background and Experience:

Formal Education (please also include significant Continuing Education):

- Bachelor of Arts - Albion College (1991 to 1995)
 - Double Major, Sociology and Music/Vocal Performance
- Master of Divinity - Wesley Theological Seminary (1997 to 2000)
- Clinical Pastoral Education (5 units of CPE - Levels I/II)
 - Georgetown University Hospital, Washington, D.C. - 4-unit residency (2000 to 2001)
 - Spiritual Care with patients residing on the General Medical and the Pediatrics Units
 - Didactic Seminars:

- Action/Reflection Model of Education
 - Family Systems and Internal Family Systems
 - Genogram
 - Spiritual Assessment
 - Trauma and Abuse
 - Grief, Loss and End of Life Care
 - Religion and Bioethics
 - Interfaith Spiritual Care
 - Interdisciplinary Healthcare
- St. Elizabeths Psychiatric Hospital, Washington, D.C. -1-unit summer intensive (1998)
 - Spiritual Care with geriatric patients and persons with a dual diagnosis
 - Didactic Seminars :
 - Orientation to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)
 - Religious Ideation
 - Crisis Intervention
 - Substance Abuse
 - Self Harm
 - PTSD
 - Alternative Therapies
- Certifications:
 - Disciple Bible Study Facilitator (1998)
 - Christian Believer Facilitator(2000)
 - Stephen Ministry Leader (2010)
- Participation in Seminars:
 - Sexual Ethics and Boundaries Trainings (Quadrennially)
 - “Understanding Clergy Sexual Ethics” – The Lewis Center
 - “Maintaining Boundaries in a Digital Age” – The Lewis Center
 - “Keeping Our Sacred Trust”
 - “Theoretical and Psycho-Spiritual Factors in Palliative Care” (1999) by Hank Dunn, Hospice of Northern Virginia
 - “Foundations of Systems Theory” – The Bowen Center (2000)
 - “Conflict Transformation” – Lombard Mennonite Peace Center (2001)
 - Foundations of Appreciative Inquiry (2003)
 - “Theological Worlds” – Dr. Lisa Withrow (2009)
 - “Critical Response Process: Shaping Constructive Feedback” with Liz Lerman (2008)
 - “The Importance of Privacy” FERPA Training (2017)
 - “Prevention of Sexual Harassment and Assault” Title IX Training (2017)
 - “Clergy Resiliency” from the Wellbeing at Work Project of Notre Dame University by Matt Bloom (2019)
 - “Effective Ministry 360” with Richard DeShon from Michigan State University (2019)
 - “Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Development” with Vic Maloy, Ministerial Assessment Specialist, Virginia Annual Conference (2019)
 - “Pastoral Supervision” with Jane Leach, of the Methodist Church of Great Britain (2019)
 - “God’s Mixed Ecology: The Changing Spiritual Landscape” with Lisa Greenwood, Texas Methodist Foundation (2020)

- Intercultural Competency Assessment and Interpretation/Coaching with Kristina Gonzalez, Pacific Northwest Conference (2020)
- Understanding Implicit Bias (2021) by the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center
- Simplified, Accountable Structure (SAS) with Kay Kotan (2022)
- “The Way of Integrity: Living in Right Relationship with Self, Others and God” by GCOSROW (2022)
- “Do No More Harm: Responding to Clergy Sexual Misconduct” with Beckey Posey Williams GCOSROW (2022)
- “Sex and Sexuality” by PFLAG (2022)
- “Thriving Congregations: Ministry Employing the Tools of Community Organizing in East Ohio” – a research project with Dr. Angela Cowser of Louisville Presbyterian Seminary (2022)

Ordination Dates and Conference of Which You Are a Member:

- Commissioned Provisional Member (Elder) in East Ohio - June 2001
- Ordained Full Member (Elder) in East Ohio - June 2004

Previous Work Experiences and Pastoral Appointments:

- Appointments:
 - Conference Superintendent, Tuscarawas District (2020 to present)
 - Executive Team Member – Secretary (2021 to present)
 - Co-Lead Pastor, North Canton Faith United Methodist Church (2009 to 2020)
 - Lead Pastor, Spencer United Methodist Church (2001 to 2009)
- Previous Work Experiences:
 - Chaplain Resident, Georgetown University Hospital (2000 to 2001)
 - Chaplain, Hospice of Northern Virginia (1998 to 2001)
 - Chaplain Intern, St. Elizabeth’s Hospital (1998)
 - Gallery Assistant, *Dadian Gallery*, Wesley Theological Seminary (1997 to 2000)
 - US-2 Missionary, *The Life Enrichment Center: A Day Center for Adults with Mental and Physical Challenges*, McKenzie, Alabama (1995 to 1997)
 - Youth Director, Greenville UMC, Greenville, Alabama (1995 to 1997)
 - Counselor, East Ohio United Methodist Camps, Camp Wanake (1994)
 - SPC (Special Persons Camp) Counselor
 - Teacher Intern, *STEP: Educational and Living Support for Children with Profound Emotional Challenges*, Chicago, Illinois (1993 to 1994)
 - Facility Manager/Resident Assistant and Student Orientation Coordinator, Albion College (1992 to 1995)
 - Counselor, *Camp Merry Heart: an Easter Seals Camp*, Hackettstown, New Jersey (1992)

Connectional and Ecumenical Church Experiences:

- Current:
 - Methodist Theological School of Ohio – Adjunct Professor (2017 to present)
 - MDiv and MTS Programs – “United Methodist Polity”
 - Licensed Local Pastors Course of Study - “Administration and UM Polity”
 - United Methodist Higher Education Foundation – Board Member (2022 to present)

- Previous:
 - General/Jurisdictional Delegate – Alternate (2016 and 2019)/1st Alternate (2020 to current)
 - Spiritual Direction Team (2016 and 2019)
 - Board of Ministry – Member (2014 to 2016)/Chairperson (2016-2020), Board of Ministry, EOCUMC
 - Design Team, “Flourish” Eight Year Assessment
 - Design Team, BOM Administrative Coordinator, EOC Staff Position
 - Design Team, Digital Transition of Ministerial Records
 - Design Team, “I am the vine...” Culture of Call and Connection
 - Member, Bishop’s Taskforce on Equitable Compensation
 - Member, Bishop’s Taskforce on Health and Wellness
 - Preacher/Facilitator, Candidacy Summit
 - Guest Lecturer, “Board of Ministry,” United Methodist Polity, MTSO January Term, 2017/18
 - Retreat Designer/Facilitator, “Culture of Call,” The Association of Christians Engaged in Faith Formation
 - United Methodist Licensing School Instructor, “Worship and Liturgy” and “The Critical Response Process” Facilitator and Instructor (2010 to 2015)
 - Annual Conference Worship Committee – Member (2006 to 2008)/Chairperson (2008 to 2012)
 - District Committee on Ministry, Firelands District – Member (2004 to 2005)/Chairperson (2005 to 2009)
 - East Ohio Conference Pastoral Care and Counseling Commission – Member (2002 to 2008)
 - Compass Group – Facilitator (2002 to 2009)
 - Candidacy Mentor (2002 to 2014)
 - FUMWA (Fellowship of United Methodist Worship and the Arts) - Instructor, 2005 and 2007
 - WomenVision, Visioning Team Member and Facilitator (1996 to 2003)
 - Ministerial Associations:
 - Greater Spencer Ministerial Association (2001 to 2009)
 - Founding Member, *Matthew 25: An Ecumenical Community ‘Helps’ Organization*
 - Greater North Canton Ministerial Association (2009 to 2020)
 - Founder of *An Interfaith Inclusion Initiative*
 - Founding Member, *Welcoming the Stranger: An Interfaith Initiative With Persons Who are Im/migrating, Seeking Asylum, or Refuge*
 - Founding Member, *The Common Table: A Place Where Cultural Curiosity and Hunger are Honored and Fed*

Community Service Activity:

- Current:
 - *Canton For All People*, Board Member (2020 to present)
 - North Canton City Schools
 - 2016-current Children and Youth Emotional Health Coalition (2016 to present)

- Previous:
 - Black River School District
 - ‘Equity and the Ohio Educational Levy’ Conversation Facilitator (2005)
 - Family First Council, Medina County, Ohio - Family Advisory Committee Member (2005 to 2009)
 - Designer of *The Veteran and Family Initiative*
 - Women’s Impact Stark County - Presenter, “Find Your Voice, Raise Your Voice” (2018)

Publications, Awards, Honors:

East Ohio Conference Endorsement of Candidacy for the Episcopacy (2022)

The First Parish Project – Member of Inaugural Class, Hinton Rural Life Center, North Carolina (2002 to 2004)

Young Clergy Initiative/Network – Member of Inaugural Class, Lily Endowment and the Fund for Theological Education (2005 to 2007) facilitated by Revs. Adam Hamilton and Mike Slaughter

Special Interests and/or Hobbies:

I find particular joy in gathering people around a meal, singing at the top of my lungs, and dancing in the kitchen while preparing the aforementioned meal. I delight in deep and wandering conversations just as much as sitting in an Adirondack chair by the lake or walking in the crunchy autumn leaves where time takes on a *Kairos* quality. During a particularly difficult season I handed my grief to God and God handed back to me paints and brushes—and I love the challenge of looking for God’s beauty and leaning into the call to co-create with God on canvas.

Faith and Leadership

I offer an observation of the world as it is. The interest of the individual is paramount; loneliness is a parasite stripping living things of real vitality and hunger for connection leaves us with parched emptiness. Each of these circumstances (and more) facilitate the evils of violence, poverty, exclusion, and bodily hunger. It wasn't meant to be like this. God created all things for good purpose. When things had gone awry, God addressed the deathly nature of the world,

*"Don't keep going over old history. Be alert, be present. I am about to do something brand-new."
(Isaiah 43)*

Jesus, the New Covenant was born like we are born, lived as we live, and looked all of our brokenness straight in the eye, saying "Fear, greed, misused power, suspicion, betrayal, chaos, hatred, bondage...death, in my name you are overcome by hope, generosity, empowerment, trust, community, peace, love, grace ...abundant and eternal life." Still, the powers that be snatch at our aliveness. There are troubles and conflicts and fightings and fears. Even among the community of Christ decline contributes to exhaustion and malaise. The perception of misconduct deepens the fissures in an already fractured system, and real oppression of persons for their cultural, racial, ethnic, economic, familial, sexual, gender, ability, and age distinctiveness call into question the authenticity of the byline, "Open hearts, open minds, open doors."

Now is the new Day of Pentecost.

Come, Holy Spirit! The ancient prophetic word slays our conscience. We lift the broken pieces of covenant, commands and community to you for healing. We implore you, "What will God do to us, in us, through us?" The creative Word has become flesh, the kin-dom of God has broken in on us. Will the inward and spiritual grace take a world-transforming outward expression in and through us? Consume us, refine us, make us beacons of the light of Jesus. Fan our flickering embers to a roaring flame. Enliven us to respond.

We United Methodists invest in the Hope of the World in order that hope will come to fullness. Therefore, we decline to accept the world as it is. As we respond to the Spirit's prompting, the world will be as God intends it to be. May it be so.

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

God created us in their own image—the image of a Divine Community, the Trinity. We are made for life in covenant community. The nature of the Church brings us home to our created identity, which is not a home for some, but for all. We are called to throw wide the door extending a generous welcome in Jesus' name. To answer this call the disparate community listens to the Holy Spirit for guidance and then responds, becoming united in function and form.

At this gift of community, covenant, and calling our hearts become inflamed with visions and dreams which are infused with the ethos and values of God's kin-dom. We are awed by this divine gift given to our frail frames, and awe moves us to worship. By the sacred Word we are shaped, by the baptismal waters we are affirmed, and by the broken bread and poured out wine we are commissioned for service. Our hands become servants of Jesus' redemption. We join Him in extending to all the invitation to fellowship with Him, to be disciplined in His sacrificial way of living, and to employ what we learn in His presence for the sake of the healing of all creation.

The mission of the Church is to glorify God by facilitating the kin-dom of God on earth as it is in heaven; investing Jesus' gifts of grace in gritty ways right where we are. When we do, public life begins to pivot toward equity,

...justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream (Amos 5:24),

people are restored to physical and relational wholeness by the resurrecting power of love, and each of us has what we need for abundant life. Then, the world will become increasingly as God intends.

Share Your Vision for The United Methodist Church:

We are the body of Christ, the *ekklesia*, the 'called-out assembly.' We are the people of The United Methodist movement, the people of the Spirit-warmed heart claim with our unwitting founder, John Wesley, who stated,

there is no religion but social religion, no holiness but social holiness.

It is important to recognize the chasm between who we are called to be and how we are living into that call. We have reason to be ashamed of squandering the gifts of God and culpable for not loving our neighbors or hearing the cry of the needy. Confession is called for so that we may receive forgiveness to be set free for joyful obedience once again, empowering us to glimpse a future story.

The future story of the United Methodist movement is not a fact. It is a decision. To claim our participation in the story of God's redemption for our time and place we will do well to release ourselves to the custody of the Spirit. The Spirit will undoubtedly invite us to review our belief and action in both constructive and critical ways. The Spirit will speak the story of our future through those with hearts turned to prayer. With minds attuned to the wisdom of Scripture. With tradition, reason, and experience. With voices employed in holy dialogue. And with hands at the ready to do the work of love.

The Divine imagination is redemptive. With God, the United Methodist covenant community can move into the future guided by the following values:

Unity and integrity. Jesus' love transcends heaven and earth, life and death, and every other polarity. The community of United Methodists may not have uniformity of belief and practice but serving under the banner of Christ Jesus grants us unity with integrity.

Connectionalism and vitality. Integrity is the strength of our connectional nature. It holds together seemingly paradoxical gifts in our theology and praxis for the sake of the fullness of the revelation of God's created intentions: ancient and new, direct service (Matthew 25) and organizing power (Leviticus 19), inner work (discipleship) and its outer expression (membership), renewal and revival, comfort and challenge, spirit and form, tradition and adaptation, institution and movement, accountability and freedom. Christ stands at the intersection of all these things.

Creativity and sustainability. When we sharpen our senses and increase our capacity for openness to consider a matter we may not have before; when we

Lift [our] eyes to the hills (Psalm 121:1) and see glimpses of truth that God has for us (Open my Eyes, hymn)

a way is provided. Thoughtful and creative use of patterns, pathways, procedures, and polity will help us to lift as we climb.

Specifically, I envision the United Methodist Church:

- Sharing the good news of God's redeeming love with all the people of God.
- Offering mercy to those captured by chaos—*the least of these*. (Matthew 25: 31-46)
- Doing justice with those under the oppression of system-wide trauma from racism, sexism, ableism, ageism, and colonialism.
- Nurturing seekers and believers from discipleship to apostleship.
- Making room for ALL of God's beloved to discern their own spiritual gifts and calls to ministry.

Our hopes for the United Methodist Church are not for the sake of the Church but for the sake of the world. We will, by grace, make our way to the alley and the prairie, the far shores and rowdy bars, the dark corners and church altars. This future will take shape messily and in imperfect measure. But Christ does not wait until we do things right to call us to take action. We are called to go in His name to offer the stuff of heaven to transform the world even when we are yet sinners. In doing so, we each will also be transformed. May it be so.

Describe Your Concept and Style of Leadership:

I trust God to order my steps and the steps of the Beloved Community. Even as we tread unknown and uneven ground, Jesus leads us into places of life-giving encounter. We travel with Jesus as sojourners together. I am grateful for those who have walked in front of me. I am humbled to be called to tread a path for those who come behind me. And I eagerly await each new step that we, as disciples, have yet to take.

As a leader of the community of God I delight in facilitating how the community organizes itself for ministry. My call involves nurturing a network of leadership. This organic community grows up around an assumption of, and value for, a diversity of gifts offered for the common purpose of sharing the life-transforming love of Jesus. Jesus freely moves from the center to the margins of this network calling and empowering all within it. Here, authority, power and resources are shared. Our actions express our priorities as we focus on the core means of ministry: presence and conversation.

As a leader I feel energized by fostering environments where people's lived experiences, perspectives, and values are dignified. And where hospitality, grace, and truth provide room to articulate and live out our convictions with humility. In an environment such as this we are set free to engage in courageous conversation to evaluate our assumptions. We hear diverse experiences and reflect upon our 'normative' perspectives with a critical eye. We invite the Holy Spirit to broaden our life-limiting practices integrate different perspectives into our own body of understanding.

It was Jesus who practiced this model of leadership perfectly. Yet we are imperfect. Thus, we can rightly ask if our own leadership practices are workable in this wilderness of the United Methodist Church. We honor the spirit of this challenge by remembering that the commissioning of the disciples by Jesus came amid doubt.

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted... (Matthew 28:16-17)

Jesus showed us how to lead with an ability to navigate contradiction—to remain in the tension between two seeming opposites long enough that the way of God is revealed. For instance, can the United Methodist Church in this in-between season celebrate what was, invest in what is, and be open to what will be? We long for a way forward in the face of ongoing analysis, variable results, and shifting conditions.

...And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always to the end of the age." (Matthew 28: 18-20)

I will, by grace, help lead the Church with this God-sized vision and be a prayerful and trustworthy presence.

Describe Your Gifts and Graces:

I praise you, God, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know them full well. (Psalm 139:14)

The gifts of God are being revealed in and through me. I delight to use what God has given me for the sake of love, transforming the world in light of God's kin-dom. My strength is in the service of others.

I have been given the gift of presence. Because I have a willing and open spirit and relate with vulnerability and courageous compassion, I am told that I invite trust and confidence. I facilitate deep listening to God and to one another, making space for all to speak and for all to hear. In this environment, a course toward equity is progressed with empathy, inspiration, and moxie.

I have been given the gift of discernment. Revelation of wisdom for the common good is informed by conversation with the God whom I love and who loves me. I carry the intimacy and clarity of conversation with God into how I converse with others—I ask probing questions and nurture dialogue. Into the hearts of those who are listening God grants vision and a pathway. I have been privileged to serve in places of authority because I cultivate a process of perceiving and navigating a way forward together.

I have been given the gift of creativity. This gift is intimately encountered at the intersection of chaos and order. Chaos provides the raw materials for when God is *about to do something brand-new.*" (*Isaiah 43*). We could rightly be afraid in the face of all the commotion and disarray of chaos. But taking the risk to tend our theological imagination and wonder can summon the tumult to become ordered toward life-giving purpose. I trust the Creator to suspend my preconceptions in this space between what is and what will be. Inviting others into this process of renewal and new birth in the name of Jesus is a joy.

My highest value is to live a life with integrity. The gifts I have been given I hold gently to share them in service to God. I engage worship leadership, preaching, the celebration of the sacraments, mission strategizing, evangelism, and administration as a catalyst for solution-minded and resource-driven redemption in the name of Jesus Christ.

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

I long for the new thing that God is bringing about in the world and the Church. God is calling me to lead the people of God into a future with hope.

The Holy Spirit has been preparing me to serve as a servant leader in the United Methodist Church for just such a time as this. First as a layperson and then as a camp counselor, a missionary, a local church pastor, and now as a District Superintendent. God has called me to offer myself to the church as a General Superintendent, a Bishop. I wish that the level of angst and wrangling with which we are now contending was unparalleled. Sadly, it is well rehearsed. In these times God steps right into the midst of the bad trouble and the good trouble. God has always lifted and equipped leaders to inspire guard and, guide the wandering pilgrims. God has been preparing me to move toward the brokenness of the people of God and the community of God.

I hear God calling me to lead as a Bishop in the United Methodist Church. Family, friends, colleagues, parishioners, and ministry partners have called out the evidence of my gifting for service in this manner. I now invite the full body of Christ into the discernment.

**Episcopal Nominee Information
for
Rev. Dr. Aleze M. Fulbright**



Name: Rev. Dr. Aleze M. Fulbright

Conference: Indiana Annual Conference

Street/PO Box Address: 301 Pennsylvania Parkway, Suite 300

City/State/Zip: Carmel, Indiana 46280

Telephone: 317.809.8001

Email: draleze@gmail.com

Website: www.alezefulbright.com

Current Appointment: Conference (District) Superintendent, serving the Central and West Districts

Family: Son- Myron D. Fisher Jr. (age 26, an education administrator residing in Kansas)

Background and Experience:

Formal Education (please also include significant Continuing Education):

Bachelor of Science in Accounting from Missouri State University

Master of Divinity from Texas Christian University-Brite Divinity School

Doctor of Ministry in Pastoral Leadership from Houston Graduate School of Theology

Additionally, I have completed the Executive Certificate in Religious Fundraising from Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis Lily School of Philanthropy Lake Institute of Faith and Giving; a Certificate in Nonprofit Executive Leadership from Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis; a Certificate in Executive Leadership from Southern Methodist University; a Birkman International Certified Coach/Consultant; Certified in Mediation Skills from the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center; member of the National Association of Parliamentarians; and an Associate Certified Coach (ACC) through the International Coaching Federation.

More information can be found at this link: [Meet Rev. Dr. Aleze M. Fulbright](#)

Ordination Dates and Conference of Which You Were a Member:

June 2011- North Texas Conference

Previous Work Experiences and Pastoral Appointments:

2020-Present: Conference (District) Superintendent of the Central and West

Districts 2019-2020: Conference (District) Superintendent of the Central District

2018-2019: Conference (District) Superintendent of the East District

2014-2018: Director of Leadership Development for the Indiana Annual Conference

2011-2014: Associate Director for the Center of Leadership Development in the North Texas
Conference of The United Methodist Church

2008-2011: Associate Pastor of First United Methodist Church Commerce, and Campus
Minister of Wesleyan Campus Ministries at Texas A&M University-Commerce

Before accepting the call to full-time vocational ministry, I was an accountant for ten years and served corporations and non-profits in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, including the position of Assistant Controller of the United Way of Metropolitan Dallas, Inc. (2006-2008).

A detailed resume can be found here: [Detailed Resume](#)

Connectional and Ecumenical Church Experiences:

1. Current:

Current: Member-Council of Bishop's Disaffiliation Task Force

Current: Member- North Central Jurisdiction Committee on Episcopacy (and Episcopal
Areas Task Force)

Current: Conversation Partner/Participant-Wesleyan Investive's New Wesleyan Ecosystem

Current: Board Member and Vice Chairperson for Bethany Fellows (www.bethanyfellows.org)

Current: Chairperson of Bishop's Advisory Team

Current: Cabinet Representative to the Indiana Annual Conference's Board of Ordained

Ministry Current: Faculty Member of Indiana Annual Conference Extension School's Course of
Study (Teach COS 124-Transformative Leadership each Fall since 2017)

Current: Faculty Member of United Methodist Commission on Higher Education and Collegiate
Ministry's Lead44 Coaching Program

Current: GBHEM Professional Coaching Resource:

<https://www.gbhem.org/e-resources/professional-coaching-resources/>

2. Previous:

2020: Planning Team for NCJ Innovate

2017-2021: Curator and Facilitator for Texas Annual Conference African-American Pastors'
Transformative Pastoral Leadership (TPL) Program

2018: GBHEM Eight Year Assessment Task Team

2016: NCJ BMCR Presenter (Indianapolis)

2015: School of Congregational Development Workshop Presenter

2014: SCJ BMCR Presenter (St. Louis)

2011-2014: North Texas Conference Board of Ordained Ministry and Chair of Recruitment and
Enlistment

Community Service Activity:

1. Current:

Current: Board of Trustee Member-University of Indianapolis (a UM Related Institution)

Current: Life Member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated (25+ years of active service)

2. Previous:

2016-2019: Member of the Diversity and Inclusion Task Team- Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Central Indiana.

2016: Graduate of Leadership United- United Way of Central Indiana

2013-2014: Board of Member of the Salvation Army's North Texas Youth Education Town

Publications, Awards, Honors:

Understanding Your Call: Knowing how 11 Biblical figures understood their calls from God can help you to understand yours (ISBN-13: 978-0998754666)

Special Interests and/or Hobbies:

Special Interests/Hobbies include participating in a weekly bowling league, experiencing new adventures with my son, and traveling for a bi-annual appointment (July and December) with self in the Caribbean for renewal.

Faith and Leadership

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

Historically, the nature of the Church can be seen through several metaphors illuminated in Scripture; the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-27), God's family (2 Corinthians 6:8), the Light of the World (Matthew 5:13-15, Acts 13:47). I believe the purpose of the Church is to carry on the work of Jesus Christ, proclaiming the Good News, and bearing witness of being Christ's disciples through the evidence of fruit (John 15:8) and the transformation of lives by our love. This transformative work cannot be fully realized in the confines of bricks and mortar (the building), it must be extended in our everyday living and being throughout the world as faithful followers of Jesus Christ.

This extension is our Connectional nature as The United Methodist Church and our mission "to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." Our United Methodist witness commits us to go extend beyond our walls and borders, to partner in the work of God in the world, by engaging communities for the work of transformation and impact for Jesus Christ. Our historical understanding of the Church, its nature and mission in the world, can be found in The Methodist Church Articles of Religion and The Evangelical United Brethren Confession of Faith as chronicled in the *2016 Book of Discipline* (and adjusted for gender inclusivity in parentheses): "*The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men (women and persons) in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same* (Article XIII). *We believe the Christian Church is the community of all true*

believers under the Lordship of Christ. We believe it is one, holy, apostolic, and catholic. It is the redemptive fellowship in which the Word of God is preached by men (women and persons) divinely called, and the sacraments are duly administered according to Christ's own appointment. Under the discipline of the Holy Spirit, the Church exists for the maintenance of worship, the edification of believers, and the redemption of the world (Confession Article V)."

The demonstration of the Church is to represent the kaleidoscope of God's body, epitomized everywhere and in everyone; to demonstrate the physical presence of God in and to the world through the power of the Holy Spirit. To quote the song lyrics from artist John Michael Talbot, entitled the St. Teresa's Prayer: "*Christ has no body now, but yours; no hands, no feet on Earth but yours; Yours are the eyes through which He looks compassion on this world; Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good; Yours are the hands with which He blesses all the world...*"

The responsibility of the Church is to be in ministry with people and assisting in the fulfillment of their spiritual and physical needs. As Matthew 25:35-36 (NSRV) suggests, "*I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger, and you welcomed me, I was naked, and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison, and you visited me.*" If we take this responsibility seriously, lay and clergy must refocus on what it means to make disciples for the transformation of the world, and align our resources to this mission. We must recommit to nurturing our disciple-making methods, which is not primarily about linear discipleship pathways but ensuring all persons understand their purpose in the disciple-making process. We must create and reclaim a culture of innovation and imagination for what constitutes being the Church and invest in unorthodox means of reaching new populations of people (or re-engaging those who have disconnected) for Jesus Christ. I believe we have complicated the cause of Christ, and perhaps it is time to reassess for whom we serve and why we are called the Church. Lastly, the global pandemic has shown that the Church can be agile in spreading the Gospel message in ministering to its members and connecting with those who are curious about the faith; even beyond the Sunday morning experience.

Share Your Vision for The United Methodist Church:

As Conference (District) Superintendent that serves two districts (almost 200+ congregations), I have come to understand that the average worship attender/church-goer primarily views The United Methodist Church through the local context of ministry. I have come to understand that despite being many things for which there are differences of opinion/understanding, yet these persons have found a community for which they have connected. I continue to share with the laity, clergy, and communities I serve that people are still joining congregations (even virtually), when they have found authentic community and encountered the transformative work of Jesus Christ, in this they want to be part of investing and making a difference in the world.

I believe John Wesley and the original Methodist movement's originators were disturbers of systems and an agitator of the status quo. Therefore, I can imagine a United Methodist Church that will equip the local congregations, which are the outposts for making disciples of Jesus Christ for greater service and witness, for these ever-evolving times. I imagine a United Methodist Church that utilizes our collective voices beyond, our conflicts, to be the leaders of social action against injustices and inequities anywhere. I imagine a United Methodist Church

that will develop new and diverse leaders for now and in the future; who are ready to take risks, launch into uncharted waters, cast fresh visions, and execute expanded means of impact in local communities.

I imagine a United Methodist Church that encompasses a greater sense of belonging that values all theological and developing understandings, which does not create prejudice or where harm can reside, and we are cordial in our differing of understandings and opinions; for me this embodies the message of Christ and what it means to be the Body of Christ. I am an advocate for honoring the full humanity of all persons, the unbiased expression of love of all who choose to love, and the unique calling to pastoral leadership that God births within each of God's beloved. I take this understanding of belonging personally and will actively advocate for it, as there have been times in the Methodist movement's history where there were discussions about my personhood and my calling and for those who resemble me; there have been groups of people embroiled in deep division or on the brink of splitting because of my race (1844, 1939, 1968), and my gender (1956). Additionally, while going through the ordination process, there were questions about my ability to effectively pastor because I was a never-married, single mother

(2011), all based on one's interpretation of Scripture. I am saddened that the matter of "human sexuality" has brought us to this impasse, because as I look at all our Social Principles, I believe there are differing understandings/opinions, and yet there are not discussions about separation because of many of them.

All of this to summarize a vision for The United Methodist Church centered around Faith, Fire, Focus, Fruit. I would hope that those, who proudly proclaim The United Methodist Church as our faith home, will fervently move to reclaim our Wesleyan heritage, by being unapologetic in our theology of grace and sharing about the Love of God grounded in Jesus Christ.

Describe Your Concept and Style of Leadership:

I personally lead through the lens of Hebrews 13:2 which states, "*Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.*" I strive to value the personhood of all, and in my leadership, I value each person of sacred worth, and honor the generosity of their time, abilities, gifts, service, and witness.

Additionally, my character is the only lens for which people will judge me and trust me, so I live a daily commitment and constant resolve to my personal values of Authenticity, Integrity, and Transparency. Therefore, I desire to be "perfected in love" and remain humbled by God's sanctifying grace, which is the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit. It is through God's Spirit working within me, that I am being transformed to align into the image of Christ and operate out of the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

My style of leadership is one that serves alongside, actively listens, collaborates with others, draws out the greatest potential of others, strategically executes, and delivers results.

Describe Your Gifts and Graces:

A spiritual leader with a pastor's heart who is committed to the mission, vision, and ministry of

the Church. An adaptive leader, with a broad background, possessing a strong passion in striving for excellence. A person of conviction in living a personal mission to encourage, equip, and empower people to live on purpose through their God-giveness.

A lifelong learner, self-starter, innovator of efficient and sustainable systems, connector of possibilities and potential, and a detail-oriented professional with solid executive leadership, management, and accounting experience. An Enneagram 5 with vast capabilities in leadership development, accounting, management, team building, collaborating, connecting, budgeting, visioning, and forecasting.

StrengthFinders Signature Themes of Talent: Deliberative, Relator, Achiever, Competition, and Focus

DISC Assessment: High D

Myers-Briggs Assessment:

INTJ

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

I sense this call to the episcopacy, a set apart call, is a continuation to further in faithfulness and avail my skills, gifts, and abilities for greater fruitfulness in God’s Kin-dom and The United Methodist Church. I believe my work in the private sector, non-profits as a staff or board member, and my vocational experiences throughout the Church have been a means of preparation to serve in the role of an Episcopal leader.

If elected, I would uphold the responsibility to “guard the faith, order, liturgy, doctrine, and discipline of the Church (2016 BOD paragraph 403.1), which I embody in my service as a Conference (District) Superintendent for the past four years, and currently serving almost 200+ congregations in the Central and West Districts, across two vastly different missional areas in the state of Indiana. With the support and feedback of an Operational Team (lay and clergy), I encourage clergy and congregations through the global pandemic impacts (and even during the global pandemic) by providing accurate information/resources and regular zoom connections. I equip congregations to reimagine the “new normal” and what it means for our service and witness in communities (especially those smaller-membership congregations in depressed communities). Since 2020, I usher congregations in the discernment processes with regarding disaffiliation and have faithfully executed the BOD paragraph 2553. While also sharing in courageous conversations with congregations regarding their current realities and their stewardship of rich legacies by facilitating mergers or closures. I also have the privilege of empowering those persons who are sensing God’s call by being a prayer resource and conversation partner.

Lastly in this role and through these responsibilities, I emphasis the consistent practice of spiritual disciplines to strengthen our ability to embody Christ in the world, and actively advocate for clergy self-care and renewal by modeling it. I speak up and out against the social

ills and sufferings in the world through monthly newsletters, social media posts, and participation in community events. I intentionally set aside time to be present with local congregations through worship participation or preaching. Finally, I serve as the Chairperson of the Bishop's Advisory Team, which supports our episcopal leader by fostering strategic conversations and solutions for the betterment of the Annual Conference and Bishop Trimble's continued servant leadership.

Additional preparations that influence my understanding of being a fruitful and faithful Bishop resides with the Indiana Annual Conference which, in 2014, identified an adaptive challenge and decided to align ministry resources to bring about a Leadership Development emphasis for non-clergy and clergy leaders. Through this adaptive opportunity, the department of Leadership Development was created to meet the needs of discovering, developing, and deploying fruitful leaders, both lay and clergy, in accomplishing the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. I was hired and appointed as the inaugural Director of Leadership Development to create a culture of leadership among the laity and clergy of the Indiana Annual Conference. In the four years of Leadership Development's existence, under my leadership, we were instrumental in developing an understanding of fruitful leadership, implementing sustaining initiatives, and cultivating a culture of call for new leadership, primarily the next generation or emerging leaders, that will help carry on the legacy and mission of the Church.

A few initiatives that started and are sustaining beyond my leadership to nurture the culture of leadership in the Indiana Annual Conference; Called to Fruitfulness, is an initiative for professional and spiritual development of clergy in the Indiana Conference. This eight-month process recognizes, renews, resources, and rejoices with clergy celebrating their five-year interval anniversary of Full Connection. Another initiative is the Clergy Assessment Performance Development tool. This tool is an online system of providing evaluation and feedback, accountability, and improved clergy fruitfulness. Lastly, the creation of an annual Call Sunday (Encourage the Call), which provides an opportunity for congregations to intentionally plant seeds of possibility for those in which God may be nudging for vocational ministry and service. The above-mentioned initiatives only provide an entrée to the vast experiences and expertise that could be beneficial in the role of Bishop in any episcopal area.

Furthermore, I hold of Bachelor of Science degree in accounting, from Missouri State University. Prior to entering full-time vocational ministry in 2008, I attained over ten years of experience in accounting management positions throughout the corporate arena. The position of three years I resigned to enter full-time ministry, was the Assistant Controller for the United Way of Metropolitan Dallas, Incorporated. At the time, I had the opportunity to oversee the impact and financial management of the annual campaign, which was more than \$54M and the organizational budget was \$8.2M. I have found this opportunity, among my other corporate experiences, to be invaluable as I have served, and will continue to serve The United Methodist Church.

I understand the call to the Episcopacy as one of servant leadership. How can one lead unless they first serve? Lastly, my curriculum vitae summarizes my professional and pastoral experiences, community involvement, along with my educational achievements, including

continuing professional and spiritual development, which further support this call to the episcopacy and the ways for which I would be fruitful in service. I believe I would bring energy and excitement, a fresh perspective and focus, and a commitment to our mission and goals, as well as demonstrate the Connection with many leaders throughout The United Methodist Church.

Ultimately, I value creating sustainable systems that continue beyond my leadership for lasting change and transformation. I believe through my broad experiences I would be able to serve as an Episcopal leader during this time of change for the United Methodist Church, to assist in creating a firmer foundation and a hopeful direction that will lead us into God's faithful future.

Endorsements:

Indiana Conference Delegation to General and Jurisdictional Conference
Indiana Annual Conference's Endorsed Candidate

Episcopal Nominee Information
for
Rev. Dr. Lanette L. Plambeck



Name: Rev. Dr. Lanette L. Plambeck **Conference:** Iowa
Street/PO Box Address: 1425 10th Ave SE
City/State/Zip: Altoona, Iowa 50009
Telephone: 712-210-5548 **Fax:** NA **Email:** revlanetteplambeck@gmail.com
Current Appointment: Assistant to the Bishop and Director of Clergy & Leadership Excellence

Family: My daughter Meghan is in her second year at Georgetown Law Center in Washington, DC. My mom, my sister and her family all live in the Midwest. My inner circle of friends consists of people who balance me and who I fully trust. At home with me you will find two sibling cats, June Carter Cat and her brother, Cash.

Background and Experience:

Formal Education (please also include significant Continuing Education):

Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, DC - DMin - Church Leadership Excellence, 2013
Saint Paul School of Theology, Kansas City, MO - MDiv - Specialization in Evangelism, 2001
Morningside University, Sioux City, IA – BA - Religious Studies/Political Science, 1989.
Denison Community Schools, Denison, IA, Graduation, 1985.

Continuing Education/Certifications

PrairieFire – 2021-Current PrairieFire is a Benedictine-based spiritual formation program for renewing of self and awakening of soul. PrairieFire creates a sacred community of spiritual formation, provides a covenant environment for personal and vocational discernment, and leads to examination of personal beliefs and biases that results in a more meaningful life enriched by a deepening spiritual awareness, new ways of building and contributing to community, and living authentically in an increasingly challenging and unpredictable world.

George Howard Coaching. 2021-present. George Howard is coaching a cohort of United Methodist Cabinet members from across the Connection increasing our capacity as leaders for adaptive leadership, thoughtful analysis of personal attitudes and institutional structures, guiding participants to revision our practice of ministry within the system of The United Methodist Church.

Reflective Supervision – 2018-Present – GBHEM – Supervisor Developed by Rev. Dr. Jane Leach (Principal of Wesley House, Cambridge) of the British Methodist Church and offered to the United Methodist Church through partnership in a pilot program with GBHEM, Reflective Supervision is a Wesleyan model of supervision that considers oversight and development of clergy as a means of grace and transformation that fully integrates personal and vocational accountability through intellectual engagement, character and spiritual formation, and leadership development.

Sacred Folk (Christena Cleveland, PhD). *Liberating the Mind, Body, and Spirit from White Supremacy*, 2020. Dr. Cleveland guided participants into a model of compassion and liberation of 5 stages of BIPOC racial identity development and 6 stages of white racial identity development resourcing and encouraging transformational pivoting as a spiritual practice with participants maturing in self-compassion and personal responsibility in working toward community and identity as its best.

Hashpa'ah Spiritual Direction - 2018-2021 Hashpa'ah is multi-disciplinary spiritual direction program, integrating diverse spiritual guidance approaches and skills from classic and contemporary schools of training and practice, while emphasizing the legacy of Hashpa'ah that can be found in the literature and praxis of the Jewish mystical tradition. My spiritual director (JaJa) integrated the sacred arts of spiritual and pastoral counseling; personal, intercessory, and communal prayer and ritual; the art of the maggid (storyteller); spiritual approaches to Torah and mitzvot; personal and communal ethical development/mussar, spiritual eldering and other areas of learning.

Clergy Leadership Roundtable with Margaret Marcuson 2020-2021 This 6-month coaching program for judicatory leaders guides participants to navigate rapidly changing systems, reimagine organizational structures, and respond to emergent situations while leading through liminal times.

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary and SamaraCare Consulting. 2012-2013. Ministry Coach. Personal Leadership Coach (GPSS - God, Person, System, Self) applies action driven, results oriented and solution focused support as professionals in ministry addressing the specific, present-moment challenges of ministry. GPSS Leadership Coaches guide individuals and groups to maximize their impact through exploring and expanding vision with increased confidence, competency and commitment. within a system of power, policies, and unwritten practices.

Certified Grief Recovery Specialist, The Grief Recovery Method Certified to facilitate an 8week Grief Recovery Method support group and/or 12-week outreach program group and/or a 7-session one-on-one program.

Ordination Dates and Conference of Which You Were a Member:

1997 Local Pastor; 2002 Provisional Elder; 2005 Full Member & Elder. Iowa Conference.

Previous Work Experiences and Pastoral Appointments:

1. Current:

Iowa Conference of The United Methodist Church, Des Moines, IA
Assistant to the Bishop; 2021-Current

- Played a crucial role in the work of the Iowa Appointive Cabinet that resulted in the Leading Now and Into the Future decision granting contextual permissions for marriage. After many months of discernment, the decision of our culturally and theologically diverse cabinet was grounded in the primary desire to live now in a manner that allows every church and every pastor in the Iowa United Methodist Conference to serve God and their communities and honor their deeply held convictions being faithful to who God calls us to be in Christ Jesus, and witnessing to Iowa that there is room for everyone who wants a home in the Iowa Conference of The United Methodist Church.
- Developed a robust process around accountable supervision and missional oversight (Supervisory Statement of Understanding) that incorporates six dimensions of development that allows for focused work on one's fruitfulness in ministry or personal wellness ensuring our pastors who are going through challenges or setbacks are given every opportunity for restorative care through focused interventions and resourcing.
- I have led from a #BeUMC posture on the discernment and disaffiliation processes in Iowa. I have been an engaged partner with the Board of Trustees, Board of Pensions, Committee on Finance & Administration, and Conference Chancellor as we navigate this challenging time in our denomination.
- Bishop's Operational Team – the work of this team of adaptive lay and clergy leaders is to assess systems and practices within the conference disrupting, refocusing, and redesigning our structure as we align resources and responsibilities to become a more healthy conference through three key components: developing spiritual leaders who model a community that loves, learns, and leads together; creating environments that foster transformation; and, directing our resources to establish priorities, practices and processes that bear fruit.

Director of Clergy & Leadership Excellence; 2018- current

- Worked with the Kaizen Leadership Team on the design and curriculum of the Iowa Preaching and Worship Institute.
- Co-facilitator of the Iowa Antiracism Team.
- Co-developed the Iowa Eight Year Assessment for Clergy Flourishing.
- Led the Iowa Covid Response
- Supported and Resourced the Board of Ordained Ministry and Board of Laity

2. Previous:

Broadway United Methodist Church (BUMC), Council Bluffs, IA –

Lead Pastor; Team Ministry; Downtown Urban Setting; 2015-2018

- Responsible for the pastoral leadership and vision-casting of a downtown congregation in a neighborhood marked by poverty and possibility.
- Brought together district and conference leadership to set-apart and launch Fe y Esperanza (Spanish speaking ministry) as an independent chartered UMC in a contextually significant, missional location serving Spanish-speaking neighbors.
- Designed Tuesday Ministry with lay leadership supporting, serving, and resourcing individuals and families in need of housing, food, transportation, education, and health supports. Partnered with community agencies to centralize energy and resources for the work of justice, advocacy, and legislative change.
- Re-visioned Creation Care ministry including expanding community gardens, launched a church-wide recycle/reuse/reduce monthly ministry resource, offered learning sessions on the biodiversity of Loess Hills and Iowa prairie grounds drawing on diverse approaches for urban and rural stewardship of creation.

First United Methodist Church, Atlantic, IA –

Lead Pastor; County Seat Church; midsize staff; 2009-2015

- Established a local Pacific-Islander ministry with the Chuukese of Micronesia aligning resources for bi-lingual worship, multigeneration ministry, and development of a lay pastor position.
- Partnered with military veterans of the congregation and community for redemptive and restorative soul-care ministry addressing moral trauma and the tragedy of war.
- Led the lay leadership team and congregation through the Healthy Church Initiative in partnership with the Iowa Conference as we redesigned the system, structure and services of this local congregation returning to our spiritual DNA and core values that resulted in systemic change, expanded leadership development, and broadened community engagement with strategic partners.

Manning United Methodist Church, Manning, IA –

Pastor; Rural Town & Country Ministry; small staff; 2005-2009

- Worked with laity of the congregation and community in developing and designing a recovery ministry that continues to have regional impact

- Empowered and aligned partnerships between lay leadership, local families, and the school to launch Dynamite Disciples (after-school program) including a lay driven reading program in the local elementary school.

Morningside College, Sioux City, IA - Campus Chaplain / Director of Church Relations; Adjunct Faculty Department of Religious Studies; 2002-2005

- Worked with Student Services to create a diversity, equity & inclusion position
- Expanded resources for mental health supports for students, staff and faculty
- Developed a midweek ministry with the Religious Life Council creating opportunities for worship, service, and culture of call

Emmanuel United Methodist Church, Granger, IA – Pastor; 2000-2002

- Created a strategic plan to pay down building debt
- Designed a student ministry and confirmation program that drew students from the community and church resulting in an intentional and expansive culture of call.
- Partnered with local faith communities and military chaplains in response to 9-11 that cared for military families as their family members were deployed.

Student Ministry Appointments

1997-2000

Red Oak Circuit; Iowa Conference

Bethany/Cainsville Charge; Missouri Conference

Licensed Counselor, Family Systems, Chemical and Substance Abuse; St Luke Recovery/Concerned, Inc. (Harlan, Iowa) 1992-1997

Counsel and provide therapy to individuals, couples and/or youth to promote emotional healing, resolve conflict and/or change behavior. Certifications/Specializations in Cognitive/ Behavioral Therapy (CBT); Marriage/Family Therapy (MFT/ACA Certified); alcohol and drug counselor (IADC)/co-occurring disorders professional (CCDP), certified domestic violence counselor

United States Army

1989-1992; Veteran of Desert Shield/Desert Storm

Military Intelligence Analyst

Russian Linguist

Family Therapist/Addictions Counselor

Connectional and Ecumenical Church Experiences:

5. Current:

Member of the Iowa Appointive Cabinet (2018-current)

General Conference Delegate, 2020-Present

Jurisdictional Conference Delegate, North Central Jurisdiction 2016 - Present

Bishop's Operational Team 2016-Present; coached by Spiritual Leadership, Inc.;

Lexington, KY.

GBHEM & LeaderWise. Pilot Partnership. Reflective Supervision.

6. Previous:

Iowa United Women in Faith (formerly UMW), 2019, Guest Faculty & Keynote Address, Mission U.
Iowa Preaching and Worship Institute, 2019-2021
Saint Paul School of Theology, 2017. Course of Study Faculty. Transformational Leadership
Women at the Well, Transition Team - 2016 - 2018
District Committee on Ministry - 2005 - 2018
Clergy Mentor/Candidacy Mentor - 2005-Present
Bishop's Design Task Force - 2014-15
School for Ministry - 2015 - Ministry and Moral Trauma - Ministry with Veterans - taught with Col. Steve Peters
Board of Ordained Ministry - Residency in Ministry - Director - 2005-2015
Examination Teams 2007-2018
Iowa School for Lay Ministry - 2002-2013 - Church Leadership, Strategizing for Growth – Faculty

Community Service Activity:

1. Current:

Simpson Youth Academy, Advisory Board. 2019-Present. This academy is for high school juniors and seniors and is a place for thoughtful theological faith formation, intentional community, and engagement in ministries of justice, poverty, and creation care.

Sister to Sister, Justice Ministries, 2017-Present - foci in mental health and soul care for trauma survivors who were harmed by rape, abuse, and/or incest.

SoldierOn – 2015 – Present – working with veterans who have experienced moral trauma, Post-Traumatic Stress, or continue to heal from their deployments and challenges.

2. Previous:

Longfellow Elementary School, 2013-2015. Served as a reading mentor for upper elementary students who either needed skill development or social supports.

Volunteer Chaplain, Atlantic, IA – 2008-2014. Partnered with the fire chief providing soul care of the firefighters especially after a fire fatality; assisted local law enforcement when they had to deliver difficult news; provided spiritual supports for the school system following traumatic events including the death by suicide of a beloved teacher; launched an ecumenical senior ministry and worship service at Heritage House Senior Living.

Circles of Success – 2008-2012 Volunteered to mentor parents (low income) on communication skill development, household management, financial leadership, educational/vocational engagement, and positive parenting skills.

Publications, Awards, Honors:

Soul-Care and Leadership: For Teams and Individuals. Using the power of story for team building and spiritual direction. Most recently led the Indiana Cabinet in their summer retreat.

Athena Leadership Award, 2015. W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

The ATHENA Award is presented for attaining professional excellence, community service and actively assisting women in their achievement of professional excellence and leadership skills through the attributes of: living authentically, learning constantly, advocating fiercely, acting courageously, fostering collaboration, building relationships, giving back and celebrating.

Special Interests and/or Hobbies:

When I am seeking restoration, I find my way to bookstores, antique shops or museums. I am a huge fan of board games & hanging out with friends over brunch. I like to travel. I live into the ebb and flow of the seasons and enjoy cooking, baking and creating in the kitchen. I find meaningful ways to celebrate holy days and holidays appreciating the rites, rituals and rhythms of the Christian year. I try to go on an annual mission trip with a local community of faith.

Faith and Leadership

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

Church is a community of people struggling with and embracing life finding hope and purpose through Jesus while learning to love God and love others. The church at its best is generative in its disciple-making, engaged in the means of grace, working toward justice especially with the poor and marginalized. Jesus' on earth as it is in heaven goal is nothing less than behaving as if God is leading and loving us toward something bigger than ourselves.

Developing and deploying leaders in our local faith communities is where my energy and interest has been throughout my twenty-five years in pastoral ministry; this is most successful when there is intentional partnership between laity and clergy. The local church and its ministry is the most significant location where disciple-making occurs. It is where we live out our doctrinal standards and theological task. It is where we discover ministry is not the obligation of the licensed or ordained; it is the responsibility, privilege, and joy of all the baptized. It is where we live into our social principles through lives that demonstrate personal piety and social holiness. The mission of the church is about sharing our faith, working for kingdom on earth, and transforming the world.

To that end, our congregations must be committed to being church in their community, with their community, and for their community. This church is a body of people who believe God has a plan for our now and future that requires us to be invitational and partner-minded in our strategic visioning, missionally relevant to what the community needs, and creating ministries both inside and outside the walls of our church that connect people with God's mission and purpose in the world. The understanding of your place in the Connectional church means we join with United Methodists around the world in ministries of mercy, justice, advocacy, compassion, education, disaster response, global health, care of the environment, evangelism, and discipleship.

Share Your Vision for The United Methodist Church:

What did Jesus mean when he said, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me...I’ve come to bring good news.” What did he do? He spent time with people who were socially excluded. He worked with people who felt they didn’t count – that due to their current condition, they somehow didn’t matter to the community nor to God. Jesus changed that narrative and asks us to do the same. He took on people as his disciples who had been rejected by everybody else. He brought spiritual good news. He brought social good news. He brought physical good news. He brought economic good news. He brought the good news of justice and redemption. He brought the good news that nothing in this world has the power to separate us from the love of God. This vision is what the church is called into at Pentecost and yearns to be doing present-day.

My vision for the church is a body of Christ-followers engaged in serving others and finding wholeness for themselves along the way. The mission of The United Methodist Church helps to transform lives, systems, and communities. The message and ministry of Jesus are supremely relevant. We grieve that not every church embodies this but are confident that the church as Jesus saw it (the community of people following his teaching) has the potential and the power to change the world. Fulfilling that vision begins with local people who know God and learn to love one another – who are committed to serve their local community. God is at work, through the lives of those who gather in Christ’s name, changing the whole world one community at a time.

My fervent prayer of the upcoming General Conference is that the post-separation United Methodist Church will be strengthened and gain an even better posture for mission and ministry. I am grateful for the work of our boards, agencies and commissions and will join with others to ensure their vital ministries are not lost in the necessary reimagining and reconstructing to come.

I desire and will work to remove the restrictive language around human sexuality in the Book of Discipline relying on the discernment of local churches and clergy to act with grace and faithfulness in their witness and teaching. I believe the North Central Jurisdiction can be a place where clergy are entrusted and empowered to act with theological integrity and social sensitivity as they each determine who they will marry; a place where all people who are gifted and called to be pastors will be able to enter our licensing and ordination process. I trust every church to self-determine how to honor God and love their neighbors in the ways they bear witness and minister within and beyond their walls.

A distinctive part of the character of United Methodism is that we celebrate that we are a church of individuals who think differently than each other and join together in the same denominational family even as the ministry practices, local policies and theological interpretations differ from church to church and leader to leader. United Methodism going forward will remain a shared home for people who self-identify as traditionalists, centrists, and progressives; a church where all are welcome.

Even as we grapple with disaffiliations and separation, I do not fear for our future. My calling is to press on in the good work of the Great Commission (Matthew 28), guided by the Great Commandment (Matthew 22), challenged by the Great Requirement (Micah 6) to live into the Great Invitation (Acts 1 & 2) and by God’s grace I long to do so in the now and future United Methodist Church.

Describe Your Concept and Style of Leadership:

Recently, I was reading Job and a passage I had skimmed over in the past beckoned me. It is the scene right before Job's three friends show up and sit with him in sackcloth and ash. It is the moment when Job's wife asks, "Are you still clinging to your integrity?" There was plenty going on (dis-ease, disaster, dismay) that could have granted Job permission to choose a different path—but he did not, and we witness in this narrative the many ways he clung to his integrity.

Clinging to integrity is the essence and demonstration of faithful leadership. Integrity grounded in the mission of God, Biblical narrative and Wesleyan identity is the foundation from which I lead. We have all been leading in and through challenging circumstances and many of us have grown weary – not of the mission – but of the tensions and troubles we've seen. I beg permission to assert one inviolate truth: Our deep longing for God and for the vital witness of The United Methodist Church will be fulfilled as by God's grace we stand firm and cling to our deeply rooted spiritual and missional integrity.

⁹ "As the Father loved me, I too have loved you. Remain in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have said these things to you so that my joy will be in you and your joy will be complete. ¹² This is my commandment: love each other just as I have loved you. (CEB)

To remain in Christ's love, I engage in sacred listening. I have a daily practice where from 4:30-7:30 each morning, I enter sacred, set-apart time. This is my time of day when I shower, center, read, meditate, journal, and pray. This is the most disciplined part of my life - and the most important.

As I stay accountable in my leadership, I ask God three questions every day: "How may I glorify you?", "How might I point others to Christ?" and (at the end of the day) "Did I love?". I measure outcomes/actions against the Three Simple Rules and know that God speaks to me in that. I also trust my gut (the Holy Spirit spends time in my guts). Christian conferencing, cohort work, and collaboration are also ways in which I practice leadership; I lead within and with community.

I am an INTJ (Myers Briggs). I am an 3W4 (Enneagram). I am a high D on the DISC Inventory. My Strengthsfinder includes: Ideation, Strategic, Learner, Self-Assurance, Achiever.

I am a visionary who is passionate about Jesus, justice, and quality leadership. I am trained in conflict mediation and am skilled in having difficult conversations and doing hard things. I believe in the fruit of team leadership but am not afraid to step out on my own as priest and prophet when necessary.

The task of every spiritual leader is to stay true to your own journey, your unique call, and the values and vision you bring into your leadership. I believe the best way to become a community of transformation is through a willingness to lead together as a spiritual community. Each needs to know their personal core values (mine include: seeing the image of God in all, integrity, loyalty, responsibility, and spiritual connectedness) and the core values of their institution.

My leadership style is guided by the Four Greats of Scripture: The Great Commandment/Shema (Matthew 22:36-60/Deuteronomy 6:4-9); The Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20); The Great Requirement (Micah 6:7-8); and, The Great Invitation (Acts 1 & 2).

Describe Your Gifts and Graces:

I am empathetic and compassionate. I cling to my integrity. I am loyal. I am open to other points of view and willing to discern toward consensus with groups/individuals. I am able to come alongside clergy and laity in creating personal development plans for their flourishing in ministry.

I am engaged in meaningful relationships and ministry on the margins – I am compelled to see others who are often overlooked. I can speak the truth in love and see ways to move through log jams of personal preference toward missional priorities. I can build diverse teams that lead well together.

As I reflect on my guiding principles as a disciple and leader in The United Methodist Church, I am unapologetically Wesleyan and so in love with Jesus and his ministry marked by compassion, grace and justice. I have the ability to inspire others to live lives of significance as we work for "kingdom on earth as it is in heaven" through active discipleship as we respond to the suffering in the world. I am committed to developing leaders (clergy and laity) to grow into the very best versions of themselves so that they can be at their very best for God. I am a Gethsemane Christian (John 17): I hear Jesus' prayer in the garden as a rallying cry for each of us that our strongest desire would be that of connection - connection to God and to each other - and our common identifier would be that of love.

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

I have a deep longing to know and serve God, a solid track record of experience with people on the margins, and am committed to leading in and being the church that is fully inclusive, stands against racism, stewards creation care, and confronts injustice in all its forms. I am grateful for the privilege to be engaged in this critical and transformational work and have experienced the outworking's of evangelism and discipleship at their absolute best.

Serving as Assistant to the Bishop and as Director of Clergy & Leadership Excellence has been filled with challenges and possibilities. In Iowa, we moved into a shared relationship with The Dakotas Conference when Bishop Laurie Haller was assigned to two episcopal areas. That brought with it significant adaptive challenges and shared possibilities. We led through the Boy Scouts of America bankruptcy, the announcement of a May 1 launch of the GMC, and experienced the heartbreak of disaffiliation conversations while countering misinformation and disinformation being shared about the now and future United Methodist Church. During the pandemic, our leaders grew weary, and some even made decisions that brought harm to self and others. I knew deep in my bones I was doing the work God had called me to do.

None of us anticipated Bishop Haller's accident in early 2022 that resulted in medical leave. All of us have been grateful for Bishop Deborah Kiesey (ret.) and her leadership during this in-between time.

Through it all, I was handed increasingly more ecclesial, administrative and leadership responsibilities and to be honest, I thought there was no way I would ever want to become a bishop on purpose. I have watched episcopal leaders doing their absolute best leading the church in and through some horrible and challenging situations as they guard the faith, order, liturgy, doctrine,

and discipline of the Church. And I was content with and challenged by my roles and responsibilities.

Nonetheless, the wrestling began. My colleagues around the Cabinet table, laity and clergy of the Iowa Conference, and ministry partners from the greater Connection began offering words of encouragement toward discernment. And I remained a hard “No.”

And then late in July at Lake Junaluska, I was at a GBHEM event with Directors of Connectional Ministries, District Superintendents, and other leaders from the Connection when in a series of three key moments – I knew I was called for here and now. It was a call that did not guarantee election to the episcopal office – it was a call that asked me to open myself to the process. And to lay aside my doubts. “Why not you? Why not now?” was the whisper that became a shout.

I didn’t grow up in The United Methodist Church. My first decade of life I was in an unchurched home; I knew the poverty and ostracism that came with trailer park living. After my adoption, I was baptized and confirmed in the Presbyterian Church, USA. At the age of ten I received a clear call into ministry. Eventually, I found my way to Morningside College (now Morningside University), which is a United Methodist-related institution and found my spiritual home at nearby Grace United Methodist Church in Sioux City, Iowa. Through a group known as Plowshares, I discovered the both/and joy of personal piety and social holiness. My junior year I enrolled in a class on the unpublished poetry of Charles Wesley and fell in love with grace and the Wesleyan way of thinking about God and the human condition. In my dorm I experienced my own heart-warming moment and shortly thereafter became United Methodist.

After college, I was in the Army – whether I was assigned in the continental U.S. or deployed overseas, I would look for the cross and flame and find my way to my faith community. When I divorced and my daughter was not yet a year old, it was the people of The United Methodist Church who stepped up and modeled acceptance, care, and community.

Throughout my ministry, God has shown up opening doors and asking of me to lead and love. God has consistently given me opportunity to raise up clergy and laity in holiness of heart and life ministries. I have been given the privilege of serving in “turn-around” ministries and am committed to being part of the “turn-around” revisioning and restructuring of an even more vital and vibrant United Methodist future. God has called me into The United Methodist Church and into this moment. I am no longer wrestling; I have no doubt that God has called me to enter this process for such a time as this.

Endorsements:

The 2020 General and 2022 Jurisdictional Delegation of the Iowa Conference.

For more information of Rev. Dr. Plambeck please visit her website at lanetteplambeck.com.

Episcopal Nominee Information
for
Rev. Jonathan Priebe



Name: Rev. Jonathan Priebe

Conference: East Ohio

Street/PO Box Address: 2281 27th Street

City/State/Zip: Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio 44223

Telephone: (330) 819-5449

Fax:

Email: jonpriebe7@gmail.com

Current Appointment: First United Methodist Church, Cuyahoga Falls

Family: My wife, Kattie, and I have been married for 17 years and we have six children: Nehemiah (14), Ruth (12), Joy (10), Hadassah (7), Tobias (2), and Zebediah (8 mos). We are blessed to be completing the adoption process for Tobias this year.

Background and Experience:

Formal Education (please also include significant Continuing Education):

B.A. in Interdisciplinary Studies (2007) – University of Akron

MDiv, Concentration in Justice and Peace Studies (2011) – Iliff School of Theology

Major Continuing Education:

Mosaix Learning Cohort – Multi-Ethnic Ministry – 2018-2019

Wesleyan Methodist Evangelism Order of the Flame - 2017

East Ohio Conference New Church Start Academy – 2012-2013

Ordination Dates and Conference of Which You Were a Member:

East Ohio: Commissioning – 2012, Ordination – 2014

Previous Work Experiences and Pastoral Appointments:

First United Methodist Church, Cuyahoga Falls – 2018-Current – Lead Pastor

Ashland Team Ministry – 2015-2018 – Co-Pastor

Three Crosses: A United Methodist Fellowship – 2011-2015 – Lead Pastor

Akron United Methodist Church – 2009-2011 – Student Local Pastor

Chase Bank – 2006-2009 – Personal Banker

MBNA/Bank of America – 1999-2006 – Business Analyst, Assistant Manager/Sales Coach

Connectional and Ecumenical Church Experiences:

7. Current:

East Ohio Conference Taskforce on Clergy Wellness – 2022-Present

Jurisdictional Conference Delegate – 2020-2024

East Ohio Conference Board of Ministry – 2014-Present
2020 – Present - Chair

8. Previous:

DCOM Secretary/Registrar, Mid-Ohio – 2014-2018

UMVIM NCJ Board Member - 2015-2016

East Ohio Conference Board of Ministry – 2014-Present;
2014-2016 - Board Development Committee
2016-2020 - Registrar of Elders

Community Service Activity:

5. Current:

Cuyahoga Falls Ministerial Association – 2018-Present

6. Previous:

Mayor's Taskforce on Religious Diversity – 2018-2020

Ashland City Schools, Chess Coach – 2015-2018

Discovery School, Chess Coach – 2013-2015

Clear Fork Youth Soccer League – Coach – 2012-2015

Worthington Township VFD Chaplain – 2014-2015

Butler Merchants Association, Treasurer – 2013-2015

Lions Club – 2009-2015

Royal Family Kids' Camp counselor – 2005-2007, 2016

Publications, Awards, Honors:

The Real War on Terror, Wipf and Stock, 2006

Special Interests and/or Hobbies:

Walking and playing with our great dane, singing, biking, hiking, reading, genealogy and history.

Faith and Leadership

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

The Church is the community of those who receive God's grace through Christ and have responded to the Spirit's call to gather and be gathered into a community for the healing of the nations. We are "that place where the first signs of the reign of God are identified and acknowledged in the world."⁴ We are a royal priesthood reconciling the world to God, the servant of the Lord serving God's will as our own, and the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood of the new covenant which is given for the forgiveness of our sins and the sins of many.⁵

The United Methodist Church is on a mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. As the Spirit draws us into a relationship with God, the Church draws us in and nurtures us toward our shared task of working for the transformation of the world through the reign of God in our hearts.

Share Your Vision for The United Methodist Church:

God is at work among the people of the United Methodist Church and we are in a crucible of change. Where we have done harm through exclusion, the Spirit guides us to become more inclusive. Where we have been bureaucratic and rule-bound, the Spirit guides us to embrace administrative simplicity and relational wisdom. These movements toward inclusion, simplicity, and relationality open the greatest possibilities for justice, peace, and growth in the continuing United Methodist Church. However, there is much work to be done in response to what God has begun.

We must find ways to achieve healthy accountability and processes without bureaucratic and rule-bound rigidity. Until General Conference is able to meet again, by God's grace in 2024, we must ensure that the mutually agreed abeyance of charges for matters related to human sexuality is preserved. In addition, the UMC of the future will do well to simplify our denominational structures to be more adaptive to the world around us, learning from our colleagues outside the U.S.A.

Over the last several years our world and our churches have felt a number of divergent pressures. The disconnection and social adjustments from COVID precautions, years of contentious politics, erupting tensions over racial injustice in America, already declining congregations, mistrust of institutions - not to mention the proposed separation within the UMC - have all brought about conflict and fighting and an abundance of walking away from one another. Some among us are not willing to live in a more inclusive community with others who disagree on these matters. They will need a gracious and equitable-for-all way to exit as soon as is practical.

However, the bulk of us who will remain in the United Methodist Church can serve as a city on a hill to the world showing how people can live together, love one another, and work together despite our differences. Our world sorely needs this faithful Christian witness to Jesus's prayer in John 17 and Paul's proclamation in Ephesians 4 that we Methodists can bring.

As we step into our future, I believe that the laity and clergy of the United Methodist Church are our most important assets. The challenges we face will require renewed clarity and refined vision toward our primary task as the Church of making disciples for the transformation of the world. A vital clergy community of tomorrow needs the best support, rhythms of work and

⁴ 2016 Book of Discipline, ¶102, p. 50

⁵ 1 Peter 2:9, 2 Corinthians 5:20, Matthew 20:26, Luke 22:42, 1 Corinthians 12:27, Service of Word and Table I

rest, opportunities for ministry appointments, healthy workplaces, training and resources today – as well as robust clergy recruitment through a coherent culture of call in our churches, camps, and annual conference ministries.

I intend to lead the Church, following the winds of the Spirit, to become more truly inclusive for all persons, more practical in our administration and polity, and to give ourselves to Christ in relational ministry with one another and in the communities we serve. This will require that those of us who choose to stay must lay down the spears and swords with which we have fought one another for the last 50 years. We must beat them into plowshares, no longer fighting within the church as liberal against conservative or progressive against traditionalist but instead working together for the good of all, that we all might grow as disciples of Jesus Christ and transform the world by the power of the Good News.

Describe Your Concept and Style of Leadership:

In my leadership, I look to Jesus and to the principles of the Wesleyan movement. I look first to serve and love those who I am responsible to lead, using a relational accountability that recognizes we are all more likely to follow and receive any necessary accountability and supervision when we are known and we know we are loved. Most importantly, I seek first the guidance of the Holy Spirit in all things I am asked to lead. Two examples may illustrate what I mean by this.

When I was asked to consider the nomination to chair our Board of Ministry, my first prayer was to ask God for vision for the work that the Board needed over the time I would serve. Though I was serving at the time on the Board as its lead Registrar, I couldn't accept the leadership role as chair unless I had vision from God for work of the Board over that time. This is because I believe that those who are tasked with leadership in the Church should have a calling from God, a vision from God for what needs to be done by the position being considered, and the call of the Church itself to lead. This is also how we handle the nominations process for leadership positions in the churches I serve: calling from God, vision for the work, and the call of the Church to serve.

A second example comes from my appointment as the Lead Pastor of the congregation I now serve. For this role, the process for discerning and developing a vision from God was slightly different. When I became Board chair, I'd been serving on the executive team for several years with many of the leaders who would continue with me as chair. At the church, I was totally new, as was one of the two associate pastors who was joining the appointed team with me. We needed to develop relationships with the staff, leaders, and congregation to learn what God was doing there already in order to be able to discern God's voice most effectively for charting a course forward.

To do this, we spent the first year visiting with leaders and congregation members on a listening tour. Next, my associates and I pulled together a group of ministry and administrative leaders of the church (called the "Caleb Table") who were able to work directly with me to discern and discover what would become the six core strategic objectives for our congregation for 2020-2024. This process helped us to discover that building up our Discipleship pathway was one of our biggest strategic needs – leading us to bring the vast majority of our lay leaders and new members through Dr. Phil Maynard's "Disciple Like Jesus" curriculum over the course of 2020 and 2021.

This deliberate, patient discernment process has brought renewed energy and fresh vision to our large, historic congregation. This, at the time of COVID when we could have easily lost steam and momentum. Our most mature leaders have started nurturing new people to our congregation through the journey of following Jesus. They've begun anti-racism classes,

welcomed a congregation of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees to be in ministry with us, and they have started new ministries that bring food to the hungry and share prayer and a listening ear in the places where people gather in our community.

Lastly, I always seek to learn and grow together with those I lead so that our relationships can provide strength to our common ministry. These relationships allow me to lead each person on my team from a place of knowing them and their gifts. In my denominational leadership, I have seen how sometimes our polity becomes the goal itself and can stifle authentic, Wesleyan disciple making. This same relationship-based leadership deployed within the ordering of the church gives us the ability to refine, renew, or replace ineffective structures and processes while still taking genuine care of our essential business – which is one another!

Describe Your Gifts and Graces:

It's easiest for me to talk about my gifts and graces in terms of where I believe God is leading the church to go, what God is calling the church to become, and then where my gifts intersect with what God is doing.

I believe that God is calling the church to become less harmful and more inclusive in the next season of our life together. To lead the church in this movement of the Spirit, God has granted me and ability to lead adaptively and decisively while remaining consistent to our mission through seasons of change. I naturally tend to lift up others through spiritual gifts of exhortation and encouragement. My Activator and Strategic (*Clifton StrengthsFinder*) strengths allow me to both plan for and navigate uncertain decisions on my own and to bring the creativity of others into reality. Lastly, my gifts of compassion and love allow me to listen to and embrace a wide spectrum of God's people, even those with whom I disagree. If we are to retain our historically broad welcome of a theological spectrum of persons, this will be vital to ensuring that all willing persons will have a home in the continuing United Methodist Church.

I also believe that God is calling the church to embrace a simplicity of administration. Though our denominational structures have and continue to provide healthy accountability and guidance, they can also hamper our ability to respond to rapidly changing circumstances – like the challenge of holding a large meeting of a global church during a global pandemic. Practically speaking, I have an ability to understand and apply our polity – from the administration of the local church, the connection of the annual conference, and within the complexities of our general church. I can understand the current rules and previous context (the “why” of the rules) in a way that allows me to apply those rules to ordering the church with integrity, consistency, and flexibility.

One example of this from my Board of Ministry is the reduction of the number of votes at our Clergy Executive Session from over 20 down to 5 through the use of a consent calendar. This freed up considerable time for additional celebration, prayer, and fellowship among our clergy during executive session.

In addition, in my spiritual leadership, I can apply a depth of theological and Scriptural study to bring joy and hope into any moment and bring new light onto the processes and order of our church helping the new processes to remain faithful to their purposes while becoming simpler.

Where we have been rule-bound, I believe God is calling the church toward a more Wesleyan accountability that begins with a greater relationality. I lead in a way that honors and celebrates the inherent goodness in all persons but retains my sense of self in a healthy, differentiated way. I can listen deeply to others, even those with whom I disagree or who are in emotional distress, without becoming enmeshed. This allows me to hear, care for, and earnestly engage in joyful community with others across a wide spectrum of differences.

These gifts give me the ability to shape the structures of our church to create healthy relationality which brings greater health. For example, during my time as Registrar for the Board we began to invite all provisional members who were eligible to apply for ordination, but chose not to apply, to a low-pressure conversation about life and ministry with members of the Board of Ministry Executive team. These conversations were healthy and enriching for the Board members as well as the provisional members who feel heard and connected to the Board as they continue to practice ministry, discern their calling, and prepare to apply for ordination.

Meyers-Briggs Type: INTJ

Strengths Finder:

Learner, Strategic, Activator, Intellection, Achiever

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

I first sensed the call to the Episcopacy during the 2016 General Conference and North Central Jurisdictional Conference sessions. Watching the business unfold and the seeing the ways that our rules of order and practices at times made the work more challenging than necessary, I experienced God calling me to serve the General and Jurisdictional Church. As I prayed about this call, God continued to urge me forward and to provide leadership opportunities in my annual conference and with the other BOM leaders in our jurisdiction to experience and confirm that call within me. During this time, God affirmed this call through several of my clergy colleagues in the annual conference and laypersons at the local church I serve who began to ask me if I would consider serving as a Bishop in my lifetime as they perceived the necessary gifts in me.

When I was experiencing a call to ministry as a young adult, I would dialogue with God about my call in a prayer journal. I recall being surprised as God used the phrases, “a pastor to pastors” and a “leader of leaders” in this prayer journal dialogue. In every local church appointment I have had and in my service to the annual conference, I have had opportunity to be a pastor to other pastors and to lead leaders. However, as a Bishop it would also be important to me to “pastor the pastors” and “lead the leaders” by providing pastoral care and leadership to the clergy and laity of an annual conference and to the entire Church.

Another of the ways that God has prepared me for the Episcopacy is through my first career in Banking. I spent the first ten years of my professional life, while completing my undergraduate degree part-time, working in financial administration, fraud investigation, and sales as a coach and assistant manager. I experienced, through the two banks I worked for, a positive corporate culture that put the people of the company first, particularly through their emphasis on people development and training.

As a young adult, it was formative to see the ways that the time and resources devoted to the employees of the company produced a strong and enduring workplace morale and health. As the spiritual and temporal leader of an Annual Conference, I would use many of these lessons I learned to work toward and maintain healthy clergy morale.

God has also been preparing me for the Episcopacy through the season of COVID in my roles and relationships as a parent and spouse, leader of the Board of Ordained Ministry, and Lead Pastor of a larger church in our conference. We have all had to navigate a seemingly never-ending stream of changes, challenges, ups, downs, disappointments, attempts to meaningfully grieve a loved one, cancelled celebrations, and making-the-best-of-it moments. I thank God that I was able

to meet all of these challenges with the strength I found in my relationships with God, my family, my fellow Board leaders, and local church staff and lay leaders. Parenting school-aged children has presented daily challenges and newfound compassion for teachers and other parents. Leading the Board of Ministry through these times has taught me new levels of patience and the need to communicate clearly and sometimes repetitively. It also continues to teach me lesson after lesson of what life is like in the leadership of an annual conference.

Leading a local church through these years has been a marathon of uncertainty, stopping and starting again with urgency, and being forced again and again to make decisions that we clergy couldn't have expected when we first pursued our calls. I have seen firsthand the utter exhaustion that pastors have faced and the myriad ways God has showed up in parking lot services, revised, new, and rescheduled events and ministries, and video-streaming worship and discipleship. I have also seen a renewing Spiritual energy bubbling up in the local church that can be harnessed by well-rested and nurtured clergy as they lead others to follow Christ.

Through this time, I have found God's grace new every morning and lots of laughter and joy with those on the teams I lead and in my family. It will be critical to carry the experience of pastoring through COVID into Episcopal leadership – bringing compassion, understanding, risk-taking creativity, help, and hope in Christ to those I will lead.

**Episcopal Nominee Information
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 homeless 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 Nominee Information
for
Rev. Dan Schwerin**



Name: Rev. Dan Schwerin

Conference: Wisconsin

Street/PO Box Address: 750 Windsor Street, Suite 303

City/State/Zip: Sun Prairie, WI 53590

Telephone: 608-837-8526

Fax:

Email: dschwerin@wisconsinumc.org

Current Appointment: Assistant to the Bishop, Wisconsin Conference UMC

Family: My pronouns are he, him, and his. My wife Julie and I live in Sun Prairie, WI. My adult children are Rachel (Jared) and Andrew (Beth). We have four above average grandchildren and a contemplative cat named, 'Spooky.'

Background and Experience:

Formal Education (please also include significant Continuing Education):

Wisconsin Conference Anti-Racism Task Force Cultural Competency Training (2021-22)
Self-Differentiation and Writing from the Bowen Center for the Study of the Family (2019)
Ambiguous Loss & Resilience by David Bowman from the University of Wisconsin (2017)
The Use of Relational Meetings in Ministry, Dr. Angela Cowser, GETS (2016)
Clergy Coaching from Don Mendenhall (2013)
Staffing and Supervision by Susan Beaumont from the University of Wisconsin (2013)
Transitional Interim Ministry Specialist (TIMS) Certification and UMEA Endorsement (2011)
UM Board of Discipleship New Church Development Training (1996)

Perkins School of Theology Mentor Program (Systems Theory focus) (1992-94)
M. Div. Perkins School of Theology at SMU in Dallas, TX (1989)
B.A. Carroll College, Waukesha, WI (1985)

Ordination Dates and Conference of Which You Were a Member:

Elder: Wisconsin Conference (1991)
Deacon: Oklahoma Conference (1987)

Previous Work Experiences and Pastoral Appointments:

Assistant to the Bishop, Wisconsin Conference (2021-present)
Waukesha: First UMC, Waukesha, WI (downtown/urban/regional setting) (2007-2021)
Wisconsin Conference District Superintendent Metro North and Metro South Districts (2004-2007)
Wisconsin Conference District Superintendent Metro South District (2002-2004)
Jackson: Still Waters Founding Pastor (suburban setting) (1996-2002)
Parfreyville UMC, Waupaca, WI (Wisconsin tourist setting) (1990-1996)
Duncan: Stephens UMC, Duncan, OK (racially mixed neighborhood setting) (1985-1990)

Connectional and Ecumenical Church Experiences:

Current:

North Central Jurisdiction Committee on the Episcopacy (2020-present)
Wisconsin Conference Response Team (2021-present)
Wisconsin Conference Committee on the Episcopacy (2016-present)
Wisconsin Conference Delegation to General Conference co-chair (2019-present)
Bishop's Task Force on the Wisconsin Way Forward chair (2019-present)
Wisconsin Conference Institute of Congregational Development faculty (2018-present)
Family Systems & Centering Prayer Group co-chair (2008-present)
Wisconsin Conference Board of Laity Faith Alive faculty (2016-present)
NCJ Urban Ministry Network (2002-2008), chair (2008-present)

Previous:

Clergy Coach for Self in Systems Thinking (2017-2018)
Wisconsin Conference Committee on the Episcopacy (2012-2016) Chair (2016-2021)
South East District Circuit Leader SE 10 (2007-2021)
Wisconsin Conference Delegation to the North Central Jurisdictional Conference (2012, 2016)
Wisconsin Conference Task Force on Re-districting and Structure (2012-2013)
General Conference Funding Patterns Task Force (2004-2008)
Bishop's Response Team (2003-2008)
Metro South and Metro North District Superintendent (2002-2007)
Milwaukee Ecumenical Judicatory Leaders (2002-2007)
Wisconsin Conference Board of Congregational Development (1996-2002)

Community Service Activity:

Current:

Previous:

Waukesha Association of Religious Leaders (2007-2021), chair (2017-2021)

SOPHIA (Wisdom interfaith justice network) Waukesha County (2011-2021)

Nonprofits started or incubated at First UMC Waukesha since 2007:

- Healing Hearts of Waukesha County (grief support for children and families) (2009-2021)
- St. Vincent de Paul Coming Together to Get Ahead (leaving generational poverty) (2015-2021)
- Greater Milwaukee El Sistema (helping kids access music and community) (2016-2021)

Board of Education West Bend School District, West Bend, WI (elected 2000, 2002)

Washington County Red Cross Board (2000-2002)

Helped to start Waupaca County Habitat for Humanity (1994)

Publications, Awards, Honors:

Endorsed for the episcopacy by the Wisconsin Conference delegation and Wisconsin Annual Conference (2019-present)

ORS, a poetry collection published by red moon press (2015)

The Haiku Foundation Touchstone Award for Distinguished Books (2015)

General Board of Global Ministries Innovative Ministries Award for Refugee Ministry (2002)

Denman Award for Evangelism (2002)

Wisconsin Conference Vital Congregations Award (1994)

Special Interests and/or Hobbies:

Family, grandchildren, writing poetry, reading, fishing, Brewers, Packers, and Bucks fan. Julie and I enjoy a game of horseshoes and a walk after dinner.

Faith and Leadership

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

The nature of the body of Christ is relational and always renewed by our life in Christ. Relationship is the vehicle for revelation and transformation. Paul's image of the body of Christ lit my moral imagination, called me, and is at the heart of how I see ministry. As a church planter, I found that relational theology spoke to people coming from experiences of broken ecclesiology and in the ministry of the annual conference, relational theology helps us build bridges for racial justice and radical inclusion.

The church is the body of Christ always self-giving for the healing of creation. The Trinity is a revelation of healthy receiving and self-giving that makes the love of God known in relationship. If relationship is the vehicle for revelation and transformation, we must make relationships that are always transforming us in love. The mission of the church is to be changed that we might be and make disciples of Jesus for the transformation of the world. To engage the mission of the church,

we must grow in love toward becoming whole persons living into the Shalom of wholeness-making community as a light to the nations. To do so our systems must move toward Beloved Community that engages racial justice and radical inclusion personally and systemically. Wesleyans are always people grounded in a renewal movement, and as such, we must continually take moral inventory and audit systems in the direction of racial justice and radical inclusion. The United Methodist Church offers us countless ways to be in relationship with shared mission globally and to practice stewardship that increases care of the planet God has given us to love. We are people of tenacious hope because we are always in relationship with Jesus Christ!

Share Your Vision for The United Methodist Church:

The United Methodist Church is in need of change. We must build bridges to racial justice and radical inclusion of the kind we have been blessed to engage in the Wisconsin Conference.

To do so, my vision is that The United Methodist Church would become more like walking a labyrinth than a flat, two-dimensional slogan or image devoid of movement in love. We have a God made known in Jesus who walks us all into and through the labyrinth for the life we find there. We were made to be led to the Center each day. I find that I am hungry every single day for the Center that we find with the help of Jesus. Life in the center heals us and changes us—and brings wholeness from the center back to the margins. The relationships we make on the margins change us and reveal the Center at the margins. There are no barriers in a labyrinth: we are all included and called to move in the love of Jesus Christ. Love puts us shoulder to shoulder, integrates the Center with the margin, and calls us all to walk with Jesus. Our vision must dismantle broken systems that prevent us from increasing racial justice and radical inclusion. Our movement must flatten hierarchy and invest more locally. Our movement must remain a movement! In Wisconsin, we are blessed with the gifts of global recruitment that serve our ministries and having 49% cross-racial appointments means churches and clergy are being moved out of monocultural understandings simply by being involved in The United Methodist Church.

I look forward to the opportunity to help an annual conference establish structures and systems that render racial justice and radical inclusion even as we start new ministries with new populations. I would be excited to become a learning community to renew our vision and tools for ministry. I look forward to global partnerships with other conferences and agencies that expand our witness and impact.

I feel strongly that God is in process with us and that we are called to move in love. I am grateful to bring 35 years of experience as a local church pastor—including a pandemic pastor—I know what it is to adapt, equip, and go deeper in faith all at the same time. My experience on cabinets under three bishops have helped me learn from the labyrinth of being The United Methodist Church.

Describe Your Concept and Style of Leadership:

I have a blended family style of leadership from my experience growing up in two experiences of blended family. I am a relational leader. I believe relationship is the vehicle for revelation and transformation. ‘God was in Christ reconciling the world...’ (2Cor. 5:19) is the heart of how I think.

Ministry proceeds at the speed of relationships that make Christ known. Everywhere I am appointed, I work with leaders to free congregational systems from bullies or processes that exclude. To do so one must be at peace with messiness. Groups do their best work when they are not uptight. I laugh often and help others laugh, mostly at myself.

I believe that these days call for spiritual leaders who need to (1) experience our own cultural humility and transformation to equip healing and inclusive community, (2) develop healthy and inclusive systems in community, and (3) move healthier organizations toward the global mission we share. What we pay attention to grows and I have had a fire in my belly for paying attention to Shalom, inclusion, and innovation in the church and the annual conference.

As the person Bishop Jung asked to lead his Bishop's Task Force, I have moved from developing beloved community with nonprofits in a local church setting in Waukesha to collaboration that allows conference systems to increase racial justice and radical inclusion. I may seem like the least likely person to do that, but the God of Jacob and Deborah loves to call the unlikely.

Over time we have made changes in Wisconsin on the cabinet level and program level that are bearing fruit with: (1) the Anti-Racism Task Force's ongoing cultural competency training, (2) appointment making and support so that we are nearing 49% of our appointments being cross-racial, (3) developing new churches with new people (26 Hispanic churches, 8 Korean, 3 Hmong, 2 Congolese, etc.), and (4) continued messaging that theologically supports a vision to increase racial justice and radical inclusion. This is another example of one of my favorite maxims: what we pay attention to grows.

I believe the North Central Jurisdiction desires leadership that upholds the Building Beloved Community covenant we approved in November 2021, and episcopal candidates with a demonstrated capacity to do this work in multiple contexts and on the conference level.

Describe Your Gifts and Graces:

Wherever I go, with God's help: (1) we get healthy, (2) we create a learning community, (3) we develop innovative ministry, and (4) we grow stewardship. I am grounded, pastoral, and entrepreneurial. Every one of my days starts with *Lectio Divina* in the psalms—I take a line with me for the day. Today's is from Psalm 25:20: "O keep my soul and deliver me." So, for example, I began today thinking about what strength keeps my soul, and how we are all in God's project to deliver and save—and I put that line in my phone. Then I start the day writing a poem, maybe two. I create before I manage. Grounding in Jesus Christ early, at noon, and at night is the gold in my life. My Sabbath Day is Friday.

With God's help,

- as a student-pastor, I shepherded a church to become racially mixed, vital, double in size and be a strength in an economically challenged neighborhood.
- I led a congregation to quadruple in size and renovate its building and discipleship system for the population expansion they were experiencing.
- I started a new church that became self-sustaining and built its first building during my six-year pastorate. In that new ministry we relocated, loved, equipped, and integrated nine Bosnian Muslim families into the community after the Balkan wars in the mid to late 1990s.

- As a superintendent, I served on two cabinets and started new congregations in that role. I worked to create a pilot program to help the Wisconsin Conference make healthy and effective cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments.
- In my next setting, I shepherded a congregation after a financial breach of trust. We developed a strong discipleship system, as well as launched and incubated several nonprofits to benefit children. These nonprofits support families dealing with grief, equip families out of generational poverty, and teach children to learn an instrument and play in an orchestra. We used a lean entrepreneurial model of modest experiments in innovation until something began to work and then invested in the experiments that showed promise to create an environment of beloved community and collaboration across our nonprofit partners. We provided leadership in the community as the city responds to a growing population of those living homelessly, and we incorporated many of those struggling with homelessness into our ministry. Prior to 2019, in Waukesha County, Wisconsin, we led First UMC in a multi-year process to become and live as a reconciling congregation in The United Methodist Church. We navigated a staff and technology shift to increase our impact during the pandemic.

Since 2021, as the Assistant to the Bishop, I have been working with Bishop Jung as I lead the Bishop's Task Force to implement his vision. Together we continue to:

- increase racial justice and radical inclusion,
- bring forward an integrous disaffiliation process,
- create a response to the Boy Scouts' bankruptcy that puts survivors at the center of our response,
- and develop a Conference response team (for breaches of trust).

This is my third experience of cabinet which is helping me grow. I am asked to teach and preach often.

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

I experienced my call to ministry when I was seventeen in a small United Methodist Church planted among farm fields. Worship that day lit my mind with the reality and power of the body of Christ, and I believe each of us has a place in and gifts for that body. While I came from my own set of privileges, I did not come from wealth. I had to trust Jesus to open doors for education, formation, and equipping. Jesus is the stranger always at the door calling us forward to grow in love and grace.

Colleagues and conference leaders encouraged me to pray and consider a calling to the episcopacy since 2015. As the General Conference of 2019 was ending, I started to receive emails urging me to pray about offering myself to serve again in the next delegation, and whether I might offer my life as the church discerns who is being called to episcopal leadership. Since their encouragement to pray as Lent began in 2019, I have prayed and reflected on my calling and readiness every single day.

After my colleagues elected me as the first clergy delegate for the 2020 General Conference delegation, I set up two clearness committees—a Quaker discernment process—and God has

continued to strengthen and sustain my openness to the church's discernment. As the years have unfolded, the delegation and annual conference have endorsed me. Bishop Jung asked me to pray about serving with him in the episcopal office which has confirmed my sense of call.

Our delegation opened the endorsement process to any elder in the Wisconsin Conference, and in their discernment, they have chosen to endorse me. I believe they were looking for a person who had a long-standing record of advocating for full LGBTQIA+ inclusion, someone who has an entrepreneurial spirit and experience leading systemic transformation.

How has God prepared me? Increasingly I see how my experience of a blended family was a deeply formative experience. My father made it clear to me as a boy, we were given new people to love, and we needed to create family in ways that would benefit us all. I had no idea that one of those people, my sister, would one day help me care for my father as he was dying. My daughter's marriage to a man born in Mexico helped me understand the dynamics surrounding how and why families pool resources enough to send a young man to the United States, smuggled by a coyote.

I have benefited from a post graduate program in family systems theory and spending the last 14 years in a group that met monthly (apart from July) to do centering prayer and reflect on systems issues in the lives of laity, clergy, and churches. Extensive time in family systems theory and practice has been one of my lenses for leadership.

God has prepared me by calling me to be a local church pastor for 35 years. I have been a pandemic pastor. I have been entrepreneurial in all my appointments but always pastoral. Helping a large multi-staff church heal from embezzlement and become a reconciling congregation was a great teacher. My experience on three cabinets and advancing systemic change in the direction of racial justice and radical inclusion has been instructive. I cannot quantify what I have learned from serving with Bishop Jung in the episcopal office. I am influenced daily by the most inter-dependent thinker I know.

God has prepared me with the work of the Episcopal office. I am the first contact with breaches of trust. My work rebuilds integrity. At day's end, I walk four hundred and fifty-eight steps home counting blessings. Most days I could go around the block, too.

God will use my 'yes,' wherever the church discerns it. I trust you with your discernment and thank you for this consideration. May the peace of Christ be with you.

Motion to Reinstate NCJ Committee on Ordained Ministry

We, the Chairs of the Boards of Ordained Ministry in the North Central Jurisdiction and the Presidents of the Seminaries located within the bounds of our jurisdiction, move that the North Central Jurisdiction reinstate the Jurisdictional Committee on Ordained Ministry as described in paragraph 535 of the 2016 UM Book of Discipline.

In the continuing UMC, we believe there will be a need for the following that can be provided by this committee:

- * sharing of best-practices and resources among the chairs of the Boards.
- * as clergy withdrawals and church disaffiliations change the landscape of clergy supply and demand, this committee can provide information to the College of Bishops on clergy who are available to be appointed outside their conference to meet changing missional needs of the Church.
- * clarity for the seminaries within our jurisdictional boundaries regarding the content and character of required education for clergy in our jurisdiction and the expectations of our Boards of Ministry
- * building of mutually beneficial relationships, trust, and connection across the jurisdiction among the Boards of Ordained Ministry and seminaries.

Budget Impact to NCJ: None

NCJ Leadership Impact: Per paragraph 535, the NCJ Committee on Nominations is asked to name two Bishops from our Jurisdictional College. The Committee of Ordained Ministry would name three members-at-large to insure inclusivity.

Submitted by: Rev. Jonathan Priebe, chair of East Ohio Board of Ministry

Paragraph 535 – The Book of Discipline 2016:

There may be a jurisdictional committee on ordained ministry. This committee shall be comprised of the chair of the conference boards of ordained ministry or their representatives, the deans/presidents of the United Methodist seminaries in the jurisdiction, two representatives from the College of Bishops and three members at large, named by the committee to insure inclusivity. Deacons and lay persons shall be represented in the committee. When a jurisdictional board of higher education and ministry exists, this board may be a part of that structure. The duties of the committee may include: providing information on supply and demand and encouraging mobility across conference lines; to create a forum for the discussion of issues related to representative ministry; to deal with matters of enlistment and recruitment; to create dialogue with seminaries serving the jurisdiction; to enable ethnic ministries in the jurisdictions. Funding shall be provided through the jurisdictional conference and the annual conference boards of ordained ministry.

Resolution: Ethics Code for Delegates to the North Central Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church (NCJ)

Whereas, the future of the United Methodist Church requires loyalty of governance members at all levels,

Whereas, General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference delegates are expected to make decisions that are in the best interests of the United Methodist Church,

Whereas, election of General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference delegates by members of the United Methodist Church was conducted with the implicit understanding that delegates would ethically serve the United Methodist Church,

Whereas, delegates with allegiance to another denomination have a serious conflict of interest,

Whereas, in dealing with matters affecting the General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference, delegates shall act in good faith and in the best interests of the United Methodist Church,

Whereas, General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference delegates do not have a Code of Ethics similar to that required for United Methodist general boards and agencies, and

Whereas, from a moral and/or legal perspective, a potential conflict of interest arises within an organization when a key individual (either an employee or volunteer) or a relative of that individual (a) stands to gain a financial benefit by personally influencing the action taken by the organization or a transaction entered into by the organization; or (b) has another interest that impairs, or could be seen to impair, the independence or objectivity of the key individual in discharging their duties within the organization⁶,

Therefore, be it resolved that General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference delegates are fully committed to The United Methodist Church.

Be it further resolved that all General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference delegates' ethical decisions on policy and elections be made in the best interests of The United Methodist Church.

Be it further resolved that if delegates have an actual or potential conflict of interest, they shall disclose the conflict to the appropriate individual or group of individuals within the General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference delegations and recuse themselves from any discussions and decisions on matters related to the conflict of interest.

Submitted by: Dr. Martha Banks, Gloria Brown, Vera Rebrovich, and Paula Roderick

⁶ REPORT AND POLICY CONFLICT OF INTEREST APPROVED BY CFA (<https://www.gnjumc.org/conflict-of-interest-policy/>)

CODE OF ETHICS FOR GENERAL CONFERENCE AND JURISDICTIONAL CONFERENCE DELEGATES OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

I. INTRODUCTION

This Code of Ethics sets forth broad standards of conduct that shall apply to all General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference delegates of The United Methodist Church.

II. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference delegates shall act in accordance with the highest standards of integrity and ethical conduct in all matters related to the General and Jurisdictional conferences, including, but not limited to, the specific standards of conduct set forth in this Code of Ethics. Furthermore, delegates shall act in a manner that is consistent with and furthers the mission and values of The United Methodist Church.

III. DUTY OF OBEDIENCE

Delegates shall comply with *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church (BOD)*.

IV. DUTY OF CARE

In dealing with matters affecting the General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference, delegates shall exercise the same care as a prudent person would exercise in a like position or under similar circumstances. In particular, delegates have a duty and responsibility to be informed about the General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference, including their missions and activities; to regularly attend, prepare for, and participate in meetings; and to exercise informed, independent judgment in making all decisions.

V. DUTY OF LOYALTY

In dealing with matters affecting the General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference, delegates shall act in good faith and in the best interests of the United Methodist Church. If delegates have an actual or potential conflict of interest, they shall disclose the conflict to the appropriate individual or group of individuals within the General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference delegations and recuse themselves from any discussions and decisions on matters related to the conflict of interest. This is consistent with the ethical standards for members of all United Methodist general boards and agencies (*BOD* ¶1702.2, ¶1710.2).

RESPONSIBILITY

Delegation chairs shall be responsible for implementing and overseeing this policy.

CODE OF ETHICS CERTIFICATION

I affirm that I have received a copy of the Code of Ethics Policies for the General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference delegates of The United Methodist Church, have read and understand it, and agree to comply.

NAME & DATE

(This document will be signed and collected from each General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference delegation prior to conference.)

Rationale

Guidance from the *Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church* and Ethical Principles from Other Disciplines

This resolution addresses ethical considerations for United Methodist Church General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference delegates.

- **Delegates are fully committed to The United Methodist Church.**

The expectation of loyalty to the United Methodist Church is specified in ¶244.3 of the *Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church* for members of administrative councils of local churches and in the introductory description of members of the charge conference. Beyond the local church, ¶710.2 specifies:

Members of all general agencies shall be persons of genuine Christian character who love the Church, are morally disciplined and loyal to the ethical standards of The United Methodist Church as set forth in the Social Principles, and are otherwise competent to serve as members of general agencies.

For United Methodist general agencies, the *Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church* specifies on ¶702.2:

Each organization, group, committee, council, board, and agency of the general Church shall adopt a code of ethics and policies that embody and live out our Christian values regarding conflict of interest, confidentiality, whistleblower protection, record retention and document destruction, and nepotism applicable to both members and employees.

Similar standards are found in other codes of ethics beyond the Church:

The American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers have a Code of Ethics⁷ that defines their objectives and the expectation that members adhere to a Code of ethics and Standards of Professional Practice (p. 2):

The objectives of the Society are to develop, improve, promote and advance, without profit to itself, the professions of farm and ranch management, rural appraisal, appraisal review, agricultural consulting, and related fields, through adopting and enforcing a set of Standards of Professional Practice, maintaining a code of professional Ethics, and providing an environment of fraternal understanding, fellowship and cooperation with colleagues in these professions.

⁷ American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Practice (https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/ASFMRA/aeb240ec-5d8f-447f-80ff-3c90f13db621/UploadedImages/about/CODE_OF_ETHICS_AND_SPP_2017.pdf)

To serve this end, the Society requires that all its members perform their professional responsibilities in a manner consistent with the objectives of the Society. This Code of Ethics expresses in general terms the standard of professional conduct expected of members in their relationship with their clients, the public and with other members. The Society has adopted this Code of Ethics and the accompanying Standards of Professional Practice which establish minimum standards of conduct for each member and to which each member agrees to be held accountable.

The American Psychological Association⁸ has a similar set of ethical standards with a focus on the kind of accountability that is foundational to Wesleyan religion:

The development of a dynamic set of ethical standards for psychologists' work-related conduct requires a personal commitment and lifelong effort to act ethically; to encourage ethical behavior by students, supervisees, employees, and colleagues; and to consult with others concerning ethical problems. (p. 3)

- **All General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference delegates' ethical decisions on policy and elections be made in the best interests of The United Methodist Church.**

The American Psychological Association⁹ explains the potential damage caused by conflict of interest:

3.06 Conflict of Interest

Psychologists refrain from taking on a professional role when personal, scientific, professional, legal, financial, or other interests or relationships could reasonably be expected to (1) impair their objectivity, competence, or effectiveness in performing their functions as psychologists or (2) expose the person or organization with whom the professional relationship exists to harm or exploitation.

The American Psychological Association's Council of Representatives is composed of elected officers from US state and territorial psychological associations and specialty divisions within the American Psychological Association. That Council of Representatives is very similar to the United Methodist General Conference in its functions and fiduciary duties:

⁸ *American Psychological Association Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct* (<https://www.apa.org/ethics/code/ethics-code-2017.pdf>)

⁹ *American Psychological Association Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct* (<https://www.apa.org/ethics/code/ethics-code-2017.pdf>)

Conflicts of Interests Principles¹⁰

Adopted as APA Policy by APA Council of Representatives in February 2017

Statement of Responsibility of APA Members

All APA members must address any Conflict of Interest (COI) or appearance of a COI before acting in the name of or on the behalf of the APA. APA members serving on an APA group must fully disclose any potential COI. In addition, each APA group member is responsible for identifying and declaring any potential COI *and for identifying conflicts others may have but have not disclosed*.

Conflict of Interests

A COI is any financial interest or substantial benefit that impedes or might impede an APA member, serving on an APA group or otherwise, from acting in the best interest of the APA.

1. Financial Benefit to Self or Someone Professionally or Personally Close

- A. An APA member has a COI if the member while exercising decision-making authority stands to gain financially from the decision. A voting member of any APA Group whose responsibilities include compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the APA for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.
- B. An APA member has a potential COI if the member's decision could result in financial benefit to a professionally or personally close third party.

2. Substantial Benefit to Self or Someone Professionally or Personally Close

- A. An APA member has a COI if the member while exercising decision-making authority stands to gain from increased positional status (e.g., a promotion or public recognition) that could result in increased compensation or remuneration for the member from the decision.
- B. An APA member has a COI when the member while exercising decision-making authority could impact the relationship of a person with whom the member has a close professional or personal relationship. A COI also

¹⁰ American Psychological Association. (2017). *APA Policy: Conflict of Interests Principles*. Retrieved from: <http://www.apa.org/about/policy/member-conflict-interests>

exists if the member's decision could result in any personal or professional advantages for the individual with whom the member has a close personal relationship.

3. Cross-organizational Role Conflicts

A cross-organizational role COI exists when an APA member's decision-making role has a direct or indirect influence on another organization within which the APA member has a vested interest, or within which another person with whom the APA member has a close professional or personal relationship has a vested interest.

A cross-organizational role COI exists when a member who has the capacity to influence decision-makers of the APA has a relationship with another organization that can be directly or indirectly affected by the APA's decision.

4. Additional Benefits or Impacts

An APA member has a COI when the APA member, implicitly or explicitly, threatens adverse action against, or promises a benefit to, another member (or to a person with whom the other member has a close professional or personal relationship) whose decision could be influenced by the threat or promise.

Promises may include future financial benefit, or access to participation in other groups. Threats may include marginalization of participation in other groups, filing allegations of ethical violations, or threats of legal actions.

- **If delegates have an actual or potential conflict of interest, they shall disclose the conflict to the appropriate individual or group of individuals within the General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference delegations and recuse themselves from any discussions and decisions on matters related to the conflict of interest.**

The Ohio School Boards Association requires that members “Avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance thereof.”¹¹ The National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) Code of Ethics includes “refuse conflict, or the appearance of conflict, between personal and institutional interests.”¹² The American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Practice¹³ defines “Differing Interests” as:

¹¹ Ohio School Boards Association Code of Ethics (<https://www.ohioschoolboards.org/code-ethics>)

¹² NACUBO Code of Ethics (<https://www.csuohio.edu/controllers-office/nacubo-code-ethics>)

¹³ American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Practice (https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/ASFMRA/aeb240ec-5d8f-447f-80ff-3c90f13db621/UploadedImages/about/CODE_OF_ETHICS_AND_SPP_2017.pdf)

Differing interests shall include any interest that will adversely affect the judgment or loyalty of a member to a client, the Society or another member, whether it be conflicting, inconsistent, diverse or other interest. (p. 3)

and indicate in Code of Ethics – Article 6:

The member shall not represent conflicting interests, except by express written consent of all concerned, given after full disclosure in writing of the facts constituting the conflicting interests. (p. 4)

The UMC's *GCFA Legal Manual* addresses the issue of conflict of interest for trustees (p. II-5):

In a local church setting, disclosure of the actual or apparent conflict should be followed by the member's abstention from participation in the decision. These situations can arise, for example, when dealing with construction (where members are contractors), financial management (where members are bankers or investment advisors), or insurance (where members are insurance agents). So long as the potential conflict is properly disclosed, and the member in conflict abstains from participation in the decision or selection process, the BOT may still elect to do business with the conflicted member. However, the BOT, as a whole, has a legal duty to ensure that its decisions are made in the best interest of the local church. This standard requires extra care when the BOT is considering doing business with an organization in which one of the members has a personal or professional interest. Care should be taken to document the disclosure and the abstention in the minutes in order to provide a record of it in the event of a challenge to the BOT's decision.

Clergy Voting Numbers
Listed Alphabetical Order by Last Name
(For Episcopal Election)

Russell	Abel	101		Beth	Fender	139
Andy	Adams	102		Joel	Fitzgerald	140
Alejandro	Alfaro-Santiz	103		Joan	Frost	141
Suzanne	Allen	104		Aleze	Fulbright	142
Todd	Anderson	105		Robert	Fuquay, Jr	143
Armando	Arellano	106		Jared	Gadomski Littleton	144
Jennifer	Arneson	107		Matt	German	145
Abby	Auman	108		Wade	Giffin	146
Ray	Baker	109		Brian	Gilbert	147
Joy	Barrett	110		Roger	Grace	148
Bradley	Bartelmay	111		Janice	Griffith	149
Ronnie	Bell	112		Gregory	Gross	150
Kennetha	Bigham-Tsai	113		Anna	Guillozet	151
Rachel	Birkhahn- Rommefanger	114		Jennifer	Hallenbeck Orr	152
Charles	Boayue	115		Gary	Henderson	153
Chiyona	Bourne	116		Woojae	Im	154
LaTonya	Calederon	117		Sara	Isbell	155
Andy	Call	118		Laura	Jaissle	156
Duane	Carlisle	119		Chad	Jennings	157
Scott	Carlson	120		Amy	Johnson	158
April	Casperson	121		Kathryn	Jones	159
Daniel	Cho	122		Scott	Kober	160
Hwa	Chong	123		Andrea	Kraushaar	161
Jacques	Conway	124		Matthew	Laferty	162
Karen	Cook	125		Matthew	Landry	163
Cara	Stultz Costello	126				
Britt	Cox	127		Margaret	Lassiat	164
Jo "Nicole"	Cox	128		Fred	Lewis	165
Michael	Crawford	129		Marty	Lundy	166
Gay	Grede	130		Alka	Lyall	167
Leo	Cunningham	131		Clarissa	Martinelli	168
Katie	Dawson	132		Lynn	Messner	169
Jeremy	Deaner	133		Rachel	Miller	170
Krysta	Deede	134		Jill	Moffett	171
Kevin	Dembinski	135		Susan	Mullin	172
Donna	Dempewolf	136		Nestor	Nazario	173
Henry	Dolopei	137		Sara	Nelson	174
Jennie	Edwards Bertrand	138		Nathaniel	Nims	175

Brian	Oliver	176				
Jeff	Ozanne	177				
Paul	Perez	178				
Rosario	Picardo	179				
Gregory	Pimlott	180				
Lanette	Plambeck	181				
Jonathan	Priebe	182				
Tom	Rand	183				
Luis F.	Reyes	184				
Rocky	Riddle	185				
Randy	Robinson	186				
Adriane	Rockhill	187				
Vince	Rohn	188				
Lisa	Schubert Nowling	189				
Glenn	Schwerdtfeger	190				
Dan	Schwerin	191				
Roger	Spahr	192				
Josh	Steward	193				
Deanna	Stickley-Miner	194				
Eric	Swanson	195				
Sherri	Swanson	196				
Rebecca	Trefz	197				
Barrie	Tritle	198				
Megan	Walther	199				
Melissa	Warren	200				
Sylvester	Weatherall	201				
Derek	Weber	202				
John	Weiler	203				
Heidi	Welch	204				
Jason	Wellman	205				
Larry	Whitehead	206				
Beverly	Wilkes Null	207				
Christina	Wright	208				
Carol	Zaagsma	209				
Curtis	Brown	210				

2022 North Central Jurisdictional Conference

Ballot Tally Sheet

Ballot Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
# Ballots Cast										
Invalid Ballots										
Valid Ballots										
# Needed to Elect										

Candidates:

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Ballot Tally Sheet

Ballot Number	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
# Ballots Cast										
Invalid Ballots										
Valid Ballots										
# Needed to Elect										

Candidates:
