

# The Northern Illinois Conference OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

# Reporter

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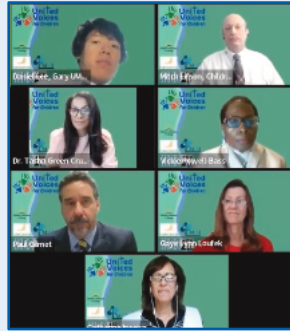
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Shortly after the mass shooting at the Fourth of July Parade in Highland Park, Christ UMC in Deerfield made and sold "Highland Park Strong" signs to raise money for a community fund to help the victims from that horrific day. After worship on July 17, the church put the purchased signs on the church lawn facing busy Deerfield Road and made them available for anyone to take free for their own yards. Within hours, many cars stopped and they gave away nearly 100 signs. "It was amazing to provide our community an opportunity to join us in raising awareness and blessing others," said Rev. Esther Lee.

## Bishops call for prayer and action against gun violence

By Heather Hahn\*

United Methodists will need to both pray and act to end the scourge of gun violence, says a letter the Council of Bishops released Sept. 1 to the wider church.

"As people of prayer, we followers of Jesus are called to be 'counter-cultural change makers,'" the letter says. "To that end, we must reject the idolatry of guns and the distorted attachments to our right to own guns without safeguards for the communities of the world."

United Methodist bishops unanimously adopted the letter Aug. 26 during the final day of their online summer meeting. Only active bishops vote on Council of Bishops actions. However, all United Methodist bishops signed the document.

The statement also will form the basis of a letter the bishops plan to send to the U.S. Congress and White House.

In a denomination with more than 12 million members across four continents, the bishops also stress that gun violence is not just a U.S. problem. The bishops' statement cites Amnesty International, which reports that about 2,000 people are injured and 500 people die by gunshots every day.

United Methodists — long committed to transforming the world to be more like Christ's example — have a role to play in addressing the crisis, the bishops said.

"This is a call to prayer, beginning this September, for all who follow Jesus, the Prince of Peace," the bishops' statement said. "This is a call to action for all to weep with those who weep and demand, insist on, and push for positive change from our elected officials."

The statement goes on to urge congregations to collaborate with ecumenical and interfaith partners in their public witness. The statement also encourages the use of United Methodist resources for Bible study and advocacy in efforts to reduce gun violence. Bishop Julius C. Trimble, who leads the Indiana Conference, proposed the letter on behalf of the bishops' Justice and Reconciliation Leadership Team.

"It is always the right time to do the right thing," he told UM News after the bishops' meeting. "We are in an emergency when it comes to gun violence in America and around the globe. I believe we have a moral obligation as bishops to offer more than 'thoughts and prayers.'"

The bishops decided to take up of the issue of firearms following deadly massacres at a grocery store in Buffalo, New York; a church in Laguna Woods, California; an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas; and a Fourth of July parade in Highland Park, Illinois.

(continued on page 3, see From the Cover)

## What can United Methodists do?

The work of advocacy is not limited to bishops. The United Methodist Board of Church and Society offers the following steps church members can take to advocate for gun safety.

- **Contact your elected leaders** via the Church and Society action alerts, sign up to receive the agency's emails and use the resources from the Creating Change Together Toolkit.
- **Get in touch with Church and Society staff** and other United Methodists doing the work.
- **Hold a prayer vigil.** The Creating Change Together Toolkit offers resources for doing so.
- **Encourage congregational Bible study.** The United Methodist Church's Kingdom Dreams, Violent Realities Bible Study provides a three-session gun violence prevention Bible study.
- **Build coalitions** with other organizations in your local community interested in this issue. Church and Society organizing staff can help you with some best practices for grassroots activism.
- **For all these resources,** visit the agency's website at [umcjustice.org](http://umcjustice.org).

"The question of how to live as a Christian in a violent world is not particular to our time or our context, but firearms make violence more deadly and more frequent," the Rev. Susan Henry-Crowe, Church and Society's General Secretary, said. "We would encourage United Methodists to heed the call from the bishops, to prayerfully study Scripture and listen to stories from survivors, and then to take concrete actions that help to build the kingdom of God on earth."



## From Your Bishop: Becoming a bishop - answering the call

You may have heard the story of a little girl who was asked, “What does a bishop do?” And she responded, “Moves diagonally!” referring to a chess piece sliding across the chessboard. Many people see the joke that a bishop, like

a chess piece, tries not to be pinned down. However, the truth behind the little girl’s response is that a bishop is supposed to join the Queen in protecting the King. Isn’t a bishop elected to promote and protect Jesus and his Church?

*“Bishops are elected...and set apart for a ministry of servant leadership, general oversight, and supervision. As followers of Jesus Christ, bishops are authorized to guard the faith, order, liturgy, doctrine, and discipline of the Church.”* (The Book of Discipline, Par. 403)

In 1996 I was only in my sixth year in the South Indiana Conference and pastor of The Methodist Temple in Evansville when the delegation selected me as a candidate for bishop. The Rev. Susan Ruach led the delegation through a discernment process to see if anyone should be recommended from South Indiana, where Leroy Hodapp and David Lawson had been elected as bishops by previous jurisdictional conferences. I did not offer myself; they prayed and asked me!

Of course, I could have refused, except for me, it would have been saying, “No!” to Christ and his Church. You see, I experienced the grace of God through the presence of Jesus at an early age. When I was ordained an elder and became a member of the conference, I placed my heart and ministry at the direction of the Church. Wesley’s Covenant Prayer was personal as I repeated, “I am no longer my own, but thine. Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt. Put me to doing, put me to suffering. Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee... Let me have all things, let me have nothing. I freely and heartily yield all things to thy pleasure and disposal.”

Somewhere along the way, I was taught that my identity and ministry were given in my baptism. All lay and clergy ministries are rooted in baptism. Even before I was ordained an elder, my ministry belonged to Jesus and his Church. Therefore, when I was elected bishop along with Joseph Sprague, Jonathan Keaton, and Michael Coyner at the 1996 North Central Jurisdictional Conference in Ft. Wayne, Indiana, I sensed God’s call to the Episcopacy. Immediately, I was no longer a member of my conference but a member of the Council of Bishops. As I was escorted

to the stage by Bishop Woodie White, someone else moved into my seat on the delegation, and I had no idea where I would be assigned!

The Consecration Service was held at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, just two blocks from where I attended high school, played football, prepared for college, and graduated with Elaine. The Examination included the question, “Will you guard the faith, order, liturgy, doctrine, and discipline of the Church against all that is contrary to God’s Word?” The most solemn moment was the “Laying On of Hands,” where the congregation invokes the Holy Spirit in prayer. Every bishop in the Jurisdictional College places their hands on each new bishop with a blessing and words of encouragement. An episcopal stole, a crosier, and a Bible are presented as a sign of the office.

*“Bishops are elected... from the group of elders who are ordained to be ministers of Word, Sacrament, and Order and thereby participate in the ministry of Christ, in sharing a royal priesthood which has apostolic roots.”* (I Peter 2:9; John 21:15-17; Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:2-3, I Timothy 3:1-7).

Bishops are called to serve the whole church and not just the area to which they are assigned. Together, as the global Council of Bishops, they represent the collective Executive branch of our church, while the General Conference and Judicial Council represent the Legislative and Judicial branches. We are considered an “episcopal” church because we have bishops as overseers who ordain, commission, license and appoint clergy to local churches. We are also a “democratic” church with much authority invested in General, Jurisdictional, and Annual Conferences with clergy and laity making decisions about church policies.

Bishops do not work alone or have a constituency to “represent” other than the whole church. Our connection allows every United Methodist to have a pastor, a district superintendent, and a bishop. We have a supervised ministry that seeks to train our pastors and protect our members from authoritarian power and misconduct. We may serve in local congregations, but with our connection, we share the love of

Jesus around the world. This is one of many reasons why I love being a United Methodist.

I was assigned to Minnesota for eight years, East Ohio for twelve years, and after four years of retirement, to Northern Illinois for two years. In every assignment, very few people knew me when I arrived, but they called me “Bishop” and welcomed me into their hearts and lives. I’ll never forget a clergywoman who greeted me at Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church in Minneapolis. She walked up with another clergywoman, shook my hand, and said, “We’re praying for you bishop, and we’re not going to let you fail.” I smiled, and as she started to walk away, she turned and added, “Oh, it is not personal. We need you to succeed so our church will succeed and be faithful.”

On November 5, newly elected bishops will be consecrated in Ft. Wayne again and assigned by the North Central Jurisdictional Conference to serve in Episcopal Areas, including the Chicago Area. Whoever is assigned to the Northern Illinois Conference will follow in the footsteps of Bishops Duecker, Sprague, Jung, Dyck, and myself. As you love, respect, and pray for your local pastor and church, I encourage you to love, respect and pray for your new bishop and The United Methodist Church.



As Christians, we are people of God who are called to follow Jesus in making the world a better place. As United Methodists, we embrace our Wesleyan heritage and live into the mission to #BeUMC and become the church our communities need us to be. Discover digital resources, graphics, discussion topics and more to help you share this inspiring message of hope with your congregation. For resources, visit [resourceumc.org/beumc](https://resourceumc.org/beumc).



## New Events Coordinator joins NIC staff

Please help us welcome Brianna (Bri) Wadlington to the NIC staff as the new Events Coordinator/Administrative Assistant. She officially began on Sept. 19.

As a third-generation member of Hartzell

Memorial United Methodist Church in Chicago, her roots are deep in the Conference.

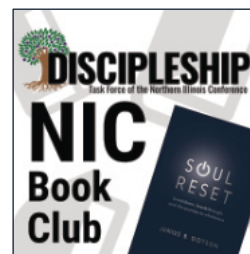
“Bri comes to us with experience in event planning and coordination, as well as familiarity with our work as a member in the United Methodist Church,” said Rev. Arlene Christopherson, Dir. of Connectional Ministries. “The role of our Events Coordinator touches almost every aspect of our Conference life from Lay Academies to Annual Conference. Bri brings deep faith, energy and experience for the work ahead.”

Brianna attended Hampton University, where she first got the opportunity to coordinate school-based and community-wide events. After graduating with her degree in Marketing, she completely immersed herself in production and stage management, being afforded the opportunity to work in several industries, from luxury retail clothing companies to national broadcasting companies.

Over the years, Brianna has accumulated a range of knowledge and a true passion for serving. While Brianna’s passion may truly be with marketing, her heart belongs to her 7-year-old Staffordshire Bull Terrier, Avery!

If Brianna is not planning an event, enjoying walks with Avery, or serving her community, she is snuggled on the couch reading a good book or the latest fashion magazine!

You may reach her by phone at 312-346-9766 ext. 724 or email at [bwadlington@umcnic.org](mailto:bwadlington@umcnic.org).



The Discipleship Task Force is excited about the fall 2022 NIC Book Club selection, “Soul Reset” by the late Junius Dotson. Rev. Dotson spoke at one of our Laity Convocations and also led the Bible Study for our Annual Conference.

This book speaks to many of us! Methodists are doers, not hearers only. We

tend to be busy. It is a good thing to be about our Father’s work. But maybe we need to begin by listening to our Creator to get our priorities straight. Then we can live as truly whole people. As Jesus said, “Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.” (Matthew 11:30 The Message)

Please join us in reading “Soul Reset” this fall. You may read it on your own, gather a small group of your own together, or join one of the opportunities in place. Copies may be purchased at Cokesbury, Upper Room, Amazon, or other bookstores.

For more information, registration and resource videos, visit [umcnic.org/Discipleship/NICBookClub](https://umcnic.org/Discipleship/NICBookClub).

We look forward to sharing this experience together.

~Karen Bonnell and Rev. Caleb Hong, Co-Chairs of Discipleship Task Force



**I was a ~~stranger~~ migrant and you welcomed me.**  
 Matt. 25:35  
**Jesus**



Lay Missioners Roberto Moreno and Jackie Moreno Salgado, who serve Living Waters NFC in Franklin Park, bring donations to dozens of immigrant families staying in a suburban hotel in Burr Ridge.

## Assisting immigrants arriving in Chicago from Texas

More than 750 asylum seekers from Central and South America have arrived on buses sent from Texas since Aug. 31, according to the city of Chicago.

In collaboration with local, state, and federal agencies, the city of Chicago is taking action to ensure they are welcomed and have access to shelter, food, and other resources.

The city expects to receive hundreds more migrants from Texas. Under the direction of Governor Greg Abbott, the Texas Department of Public Safety, and the Texas National Guard, the Lone Star state has also bused over 8,000 migrants to the nation's capital since April and over 2,200 migrants to New York City since August 5, according to the state's website.

Individuals and families are being housed in temporary Chicago shelters and hotels in nearby suburbs.

### Immediate donation needs include:

- Small size clothing: especially socks, underwear, sports bras
- First Aid kits (Band-aids, Bandages, etc)
- Medications for adults and children: Ibuprofen, Acetaminophen, etc.
- Personal Hygiene items: toiletries, feminine products, etc.
- Duffle Bags/Small Suitcases

### NIC Collection sites by district

NIC Refugee Coordinator Rev. Jonathan Crail is organizing with churches across the conference in each district to serve as donation collection sites to be centralized locations to bring the items to the city.

### Lake North:

**Galilee UMC, Highland Park Church**  
 1696 McGovern St,  
 Highland Park, IL 60035  
**Contact:** Pastor Jake Cho,  
*pastor.jakecho@gmail.com*  
 617-678-5815  
**Hours:** By appointment only (Call Pastor Cho)

**Glenview United Methodist Church**  
 727 N. Harlem Ave.,  
 Glenview, IL 50025  
 847-729-1015  
**Contact:** Ethel Doyle, *lareth@aol.com*  
 847-975-0361  
**Hours:** M-R, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. or by appointment

### Lake South District

**St. Andrew UMC, Homewood**  
 18850 Riegel Rd.,  
 Homewood, IL 60430  
**Contact:** Carolyn Funk,  
*shevokas@comcast.net*  
 708-957-1923  
**Hours:** Monday 10-1, Thursday 10-2, Friday 4-6 p.m.

### First UMC in LaGrange

100 W Cossitt Ave.,  
 La Grange, IL 60525  
**Contact:** Hattie Koher,  
*youth@fumclg.org*  
 847-682-7896  
**Hours:** Drop off box outside church office 9 a.m.-4 p.m. (other times available by request)

### Prairie Central District:

**Aldersgate UMC, Wheaton**  
 1753 S Blanchard Street,  
 Wheaton, IL 60189  
**Contact:** Daniel Cochran,  
*Aldersgate.Wheaton@gmail.com*  
 401-864-2441  
**Hours:** By Appointment with Daniel

### Prairie South District:

**Sycamore UMC**  
 160 Johnson Ave.,  
 Sycamore, IL 60178  
**Contact:** Debbie Elleson,  
*Debbie@sycamoreumc.org*  
 815-895-9113  
**Hours:** M-F, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

### Sugar Grove UMC

176 Main St.,  
 Sugar Grove, IL 60554  
**Contact:** Rev. Tammy Scott,  
*revtammyscott@gmail.com*  
 630-254-4127  
**Hours:** M and R, 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m. (Bin located near rear entrance for after hours donations)

### Channahon UMC

24751 West Eames St.,  
 Channahon, IL 60410  
**Contact:** Lana Stafford,  
*lantwin@sbcglobal.net*  
 (815) 467-5275  
**Drop Off Hours:** T-F 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., or Saturday by appt.

### Prairie North:

**Faith UMC, Freeport**  
 1440 S. Walnut Ave.,  
 Freeport, IL 61032  
**Contact:** Lisa Hunziker,  
*FaithUMC@faith-umc.com*  
 815-232-6533  
**Hours:** M-F, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Thank you to Prince of Peace UMC for already donating vans full of supplies to migrants who are being housed in Elk Grove Village. In addition, they collected \$625, which the mission team spent on additional items such as jackets and jeans. Similar stories are coming in as our churches continue to help.

For more information on volunteering and comprehensive list of items needed, visit [umcnic.org/news/help-immigrants-arriving-from-texas](http://umcnic.org/news/help-immigrants-arriving-from-texas).

### Legal Assistance

The Northern Illinois Justice for Our Neighbors is helping migrants seeking asylum with paperwork and court dates. To support their work, visit [nijfon.org](http://nijfon.org).



## From the Cover

Beyond the horror of headline-making mass shootings, the U.S. also has experienced a rise in gun deaths overall. More Americans died of *gun*-related injuries in 2020 than in any other year on record, reported the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. In all, 45,222 people in the U.S. died that year in homicides or suicides involving firearms.

Gun violence also has taken a personal toll on United Methodists. The bishops spent part of their August meeting mourning the death of the Rev. Autura Eason-Williams, a district superintendent and former episcopal candidate fatally shot in an apparent carjacking in Memphis, Tennessee.

Immediately after the deaths of 19 children and two teachers in Uvalde, Council of Bishops President Thomas J. Bickerton called on United Methodists to “go on the offense” to stop mass shootings.

Those words echoed throughout the U.S. annual conference season this spring and summer. More than a dozen of the denomination's regional bodies took a public stand to address gun violence when they met this year.

A number of the conference resolutions and the bishops' letter advocated for the same measures recommended in “Our Call to End Gun Violence,” which the denomination's General Conference adopted in 2016.

The General Conference resolution quotes God's dream for peace in Micah 4 that “they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks...”

The resolution calls for, among other steps, “banning large-capacity ammunition magazines and weapons designed to fire multiple rounds each time the trigger is pulled.”

*“The Church is called to be an instrument of God's grace. As people of prayer, we followers of Jesus are called to be “counter-cultural change makers.” To that end, we must reject the idolatry of guns and the distorted attachment to our right to own guns without safeguards for the communities of the world.”*

The bishops' letter also calls for an assault weapons ban. The U.S. previously banned assault weapons from 1994 to 2004, and the number of mass shootings fell during that time. Since the ban expired, the U.S. has seen a steep rise in mass shooting deaths.

The U.S. House of Representatives in July passed a bill to reinstate the assault weapons ban. The bill is now before the U.S. Senate, where many longtime political observers expect the proposal will not be able to achieve the 60 votes required to overcome a filibuster and move forward.

But some are not so sure the bill is doomed. The public pressure from United Methodists and others has already led to some gun reforms. In late June, the U.S. Congress passed and President Biden signed into law the Bipartisan

Safer Communities Act — the most significant federal gun-safety legislation in decades.

The new law, a compromise, includes money for school safety, mental health and incentives for states to provide a more comprehensive background check of 18- to 21-year-olds who want to buy guns.

“We are seeing more and more grassroots activists demanding action from their elected leaders on gun violence prevention,” said the Rev. Susan Henry-Crowe, the top executive of the United Methodist Board of Church and Society — the agency that works to promote United Methodist social teachings. Henry-Crowe worked with the bishops in developing their statement. “The mobilization of regular people across the country was the deciding factor in getting the Safer Communities Act signed into law earlier this summer,” she told UM News. “Our youth and young adults are particularly passionate about this issue and are demanding that their communities rally around them in taking a stand against a culture of violence.”

Trimble said that by making a stand, the bishops are being faithful to The United Methodist Church's commitments and obedient to their own prophetic and teaching roles as episcopal leaders. The bishops are hoping their words will influence at least some U.S. senators, six of whom are United Methodist.

Trimble put it this way: “If there are evidence-based solutions that can lessen the number of deaths due to firearms, why would we not pursue them?”

*\*Hahn is assistant news editor for UM News.*





Rev. Daniel C. Cochran stands in a growing garden this summer that's become a budding ministry for Aldersgate UMC in Wheaton.



Church members and residents gather at a Harvest of Harmony Festival at Maple Park UMC in Chicago on September 10 to celebrate an abundant crop from a community garden ministry.

## Gardening ministry builds community in south Wheaton

Aldersgate UMC is celebrating the successful start to a new gardening ministry in south Wheaton. Located on South Blanchard Street, just to the north of Rice Pool and Water Park, the community garden is designed to provide immigrants and refugees resettled through World Relief an opportunity to raise their own fresh produce.

Aldersgate member and garden director Jeff Bray, who regularly serves as a tutor with World Relief, notes that "coming to a new country with a different culture takes many familiar things away. Growing familiar foods gives you back some sense of control."

Many of the current garden plots are cultivated by members of a Burmese congregation that meets for worship at Aldersgate. Bray observes that these families are experienced farmers, and they "have done a great job of using the space available to grow a large selection of plants, using innovative trellises to maximize the yield." Van Ro Sung, a member of the Burmese congregation, shares that her community "loves to see the garden because it brings them relaxation, peace, and happiness." She adds that it is a blessing to share the harvest within the congregation, with members of Aldersgate, and with neighbors in the community.

Other plots are cultivated by residents such as Rebecca Lasky, whose son is a member of the Boy Scout Troop that meets at Aldersgate Church. Rebecca "feels very fortunate to participate in the Aldersgate community garden. I have enjoyed guiding our son in our garden planning... We have also felt fortunate to enjoy delicious local produce."

Resident Lisa Balon has cultivated a plot with her

daughter and they enjoyed finding new recipes for their produce, from zoodles to banana bread, zucchini cheddar beer bread to zucchini chocolate chip cookies. Lisa shares that they are going to try their hand at pickling cucumbers – a fitting project since Aldersgate Church was "planted" amidst vast cucumber fields back in 1961.

Jeff Bray and co-director Ian Grigsby have plans to expand the garden in 2023. They will develop the existing watering system to support additional plots for new refugee families as well as settled residents looking for land to cultivate. In a possible partnership with Gary United Methodist Church, Aldersgate plans to dedicate a large plot to growing fresh produce for local food pantries.

## Rockford children tend church garden

"Hooray! The produce from the Learning Garden is bountiful!" said Grace UMC member Donnette Nailor, organizer of a community garden ministry she helped start two years ago.

Grace UMC in Rockford partnered with the Rockford Public Schools to plant a 40X18 ft. garden bed at The Grove at Keith Creek, a public housing development. Nailor said they received federal dollars to support the program to provide children with social and emotional connections after the pandemic.

Volunteers from the church and community met weekly with children from The Grove to grow vegetables this summer, including tomatoes, green beans, turnips, squash, lettuce and some new ones to the kids. "They learned for the first time about zucchini, which they thought was fun," said Nailor. "A local chef also taught them how to cook (and eat) the vegetables they helped grow."

The children got to take home the fruits of their labor and shared the extra veggies with senior residents in the community.

"Our hope is to expand the children's knowledge of healthy food and add produce to their diet," said Nailor. "More importantly, it's an opportunity to establish relationships. Love and blessings were plentiful for all who participated."

## Chicago church celebrates harvest

The Maple Park Community Garden Ministry in Chicago grew from a dream to reality when it was first planted in the summer of 2021. It yielded a small crop last year; however, in 2022, gardeners harvested an abundance of produce to share with community residents, Maple Park UMC food ministries and church members.

The church celebrated the garden's first event, the Harvest of Harmony Festival, on Saturday, September 10. The free festival featured games, produce giveaways, music, live performances, and community vendors offering locally made food and goods. It was an intergenerational event with young children all the way to seasoned seniors in their 90s.

The garden comes as a partnership between Maple Park UMC and Root + Branch Church. The garden offers opportunities to enjoy nature, learn about organic gardening and earth care, and nurture new relationships. The garden is also a place where diverse people, of different identities and backgrounds, come together and work toward a common passion for food justice and sustainable living. Organizers said, "we had a marvelous time!"



The Learning Garden is a community garden in cooperation with Grace UMC and the Rockford Public Schools and supported by federal dollars to give students social and educational opportunities outside of the pandemic.



Children show off fresh vegetables and bountiful baskets of tomatoes, squash, beans, lettuce and more after learning about gardening and healthy eating this summer through the Learning Garden.



Children plant seeds for a second crop in the garden at Faith UMC in Freeport, which has been growing vegetables for eight years. The youth and children in Sunday school, the K-8th Wednesday after-school group and day camp help plant and take care of the gardens and share the produce. The produce is also shared at the block party that the church hosts every year as a kickoff to back to school.

# Laity leadership revitalizes church's young adult ministry

By Rev. Thomas E. Kim\*

Many Korean churches have a minister take charge of young adult ministry because they are young — regardless of their talents, grace and gifts.

However, not all young ministers have the passion for young adult ministry.

Even if they have such gifts, their ability and capability can often be limited because most are seminarians who must also focus on their studies.

In addition, the interval of their ministry in a church is relatively short. After completing studies or being ordained, they often get an appointment to a new church and leave. A new part-time minister follows and begins the young adult ministry from square one.

These circumstances pose a challenge for the young adult ministry of Korean churches.

However, First Korean United Methodist Church in Wheeling, Illinois, tried something different. Rather than hiring another paid staff for its young adult ministry, the church entrusted it to a devoted and committed volunteer layperson with a calling and vision.

Since its founding in September 1923 as the first Korean church in the North Central region of the U.S., the church served as a spiritual center for the Korean immigrant community. But recently, the church has stagnated. In comparison, however, the young adult ministry has seen a revival, growing more than ever before.

In this church, too, the young adult group was repeatedly disbanded and dismantled, and the continuity of the ministry had been lost.

The life of the young adult ministry was in danger in 2015 with membership shrinking to one.

Church member Jinho Woo thought the young adult ministry would not continue if the church depended on a pastor, so he began actively participating in the ministry in September 2016. He promised before starting: "I will keep the First Korean UMC's young adult ministry till it lasts."

Even though he was busy with his own business, Woo set a goal to use the year 2016 to find lost sheep, making time for one-on-one contact with young adults and college students who had left the church. And as he treated them with his own money at a restaurant, Woo began to listen to figure out their voices and needs.

"My role was to witness to my faith to young adults, listen to their spiritual concerns, and buy their meals," he said.

In Korean culture, according to Woo, buying a meal means more than just paying for one meal for them, and eating together is an expression of interest and a stepping stone for forming relationships and communicating.

Woo attributed the growth and revitalization of the

ministry to the dedication and effort of Ha-Yan Song, the only member left in the young adult group in 2015.

"When all my sisters and brothers in Christ left the church, I kept the young adult group by myself and prayed in tears," Song said.

In September 2016, Woo met Song at a coffee shop in downtown Chicago, asked for her wish list for the young adult group, and promised to do it. The wish list included making young adult group T-shirts and having a retreat and Bible study. Everything came true within 18 months.

The young adult group resumed with its own worship service, a prayer meeting and a Bible study with Song, Woo and his wife, Seungyun. Song began inviting her friends who were thirsty and hungry spiritually but had no opportunity to be fed. The young adult ministry started to change and grow in 2017.

All the group leaders agree that the keys to the revitalization and growth of the church's young adult ministry are the devoted lay leaders, their leadership and discipleship training.

Song said that the driving force for its growth was the small group discipleship class where they were led to a Christlike life and felt the love of Christ in their fellowship.

"The discipleship class was the most powerful way to make disciples of Christ, and, in fact, it did change our lives," she said. "Our life can be distinguished before and after the discipleship class. We share the deep joy of walking with God and fellow Christians."

Song also mentioned the importance of the "Ride Ministry" for members' fellowship and Christian living. Since many in the young adult group who go to school in downtown Chicago and the suburbs don't have cars, she said that they share their faith with coffee in the church van.

Ah-Hae Song, one of the group's leaders, was one of the spiritually thirsty young adults before she attended the church.

"Since I joined the FKUMC, my spiritual hunger was satisfied through the Bible study, prayer meetings and fellowship to share Christian life regularly," she said.

Ah-Hae Song said a regular retreat was another important ministry for her spiritual growth.



Members of the young adult group of First Korean United Methodist Church in Wheeling, Ill., gather together after a worship service on June 13. Photo by the Rev. Thomas Kim, UM News.

"I had time to look into the roots of my bitterness, which were caused by the thorn and wounds in me, at the retreat I attended [for the] first time in 2020, and I was able to heal my wounds and restore relationships with God and friends," she said.

The young adult group of First Korean United Methodist Church is no longer made up of just one young adult member. Now, 50-60 worship together every Sunday. About 20 people leave the group for other regions of the U.S. every year for their work or schools, and they welcome about 30 young ones and baptize three or four annually. Woo stressed the significance of the small group ministry.

"The Word must permeate into our lives but does not because people only accumulate knowledge of the Bible, which means the church has no power," he said. "Most class meetings of existing churches have become social gatherings without any accountability or responsibility to each other."

"Our small group ministry is to restore the class and band meetings that (Methodism founder) John Wesley did, and one of the bold goals of the young adult ministry is to make 100 Disciples of Christ to transform Chicagoland and the world."

Ha-Yan Song, now a young adult ministry helper, recommends for people not to lose their holy calling.

"Do not lose the soul of your coworker by following worldly methods to do things well," she said. "The world is interested in what the true church and Christians look like. Do not give up on the purpose God is pleased with. What young people wonder about is not of the world, but of Christ."

*\*Kim is director of Korean and Asian news at United Methodist Communications.*

## WCC General Assembly closes with call to 'act for justice'

By Klaus Ulrich Ruof, Translated by David W. Scott

The 11th General Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) is now history. At the ecumenical summit in Karlsruhe, Germany, around 3,000 participants from 120 countries met Aug. 31-Sept. 8 to discuss the future direction of ecumenism. The meeting ended with a worship service.

The World Council of Churches is a community of 352 churches that together represent over 580 million Christians worldwide. The Roman Catholic Church is not a member but has observer status. This large, ecumenical, worldwide association is headquartered in Geneva and was founded Aug. 23, 1948, in Amsterdam; its General Assembly meets every eight years.

In a message at the end of the meeting, delegates called for the "healing of our living planet." The message, titled "A Call To Act Together," read: "We will find a strength to act from a unity founded in Christ's love." The goal is to create and maintain peace.

The message, which ties in with the texts of the General Assemblies of 1948 in Amsterdam and 1975 in Nairobi, warns of catastrophes that originate in an irresponsible and broken relationship with creation that has led to ecological injustice and the climate crisis.

Referring to the theme of the General Assembly, "Christ's Love Moves the World to Reconciliation and Unity," the delegates emphasized that Christ's love urges us to come to Christ in solidarity and "to respond and act for justice."

Fifteen members of the Methodist church family belong to the 150-member Central Committee, including two from The United Methodist Church: Bishop Sally Dyck, the ecumenical officer of the international Council of Bishops of The United Methodist Church, and the Rev. Ann Jacob, who serves as a pastor of Edmonds United Methodist Church in Washington. On the final day of the meeting, the WCC central committee elected Bishop Dyck to its 20-member executive committee.

Meeting every two years, the Central Committee is the highest governing body of the WCC in the time in between General Assemblies. It carries out the policies adopted by the General Assembly, supervises and directs the program work, and decides on the budget.

As the size and composition of the Central Committee for the next eight years were being determined, a group of 38 young General Assembly members put forward a statement of protest. As members of the generation

affected by present and coming developments in climate and society, and in view of the worldwide number of young people, they demanded more participation and voices on the committee.

The policy committee of the WCC noted that youth must be fully included in all of its commissions, committees, advisory groups and reference groups. However, some member churches apparently hesitate to nominate young people for the Central Committee and other committees.

Newly elected General Secretary Jerry Pillay gave a speech to the members of the General Assembly at the end of the meeting. Pillay is dean of the Faculty of Theology and Religion at the University of Pretoria in South Africa and a member of the Union Presbyterian Church in southern Africa. He will take over as general secretary from the Rev. Ioan Saucă on Jan. 1, 2023. Saucă had been serving since 2020 on an interim basis after former General Secretary Olav Fykse Tveit was named head bishop of the Church of Norway.

Pillay stressed his vision that the WCC member churches and their partners work together to "proclaim the good news of salvation and life in Christ" to the world.

*continued on page 8, see General Assembly*

# Hungarian camp houses Ukrainian Roma refugees

By Joey Butler\*

The Rev. László A. Khaled, district superintendent of The United Methodist Church in Hungary, said that at the start of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, about 800,000 refugees crossed through his country. Many were headed to Western Europe, so their needs were short-term.

“People left rapidly and sometimes we just received a call that they are at the border and needed beds for three, five, six people for a few days,” he said. “The Methodist Church Center was the biggest refugee center in Budapest, but local congregations were involved as well.”

Thanks to a \$10,000 solidarity grant from the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), Khaled said the church could act immediately to help refugees when the war started. They helped families with clothes, food and shelter, and tried to help buy medicine or help obtain official documentation, since many refugees fled Ukraine without documents or identification.

In addition to solidarity grants for emergency assistance to arriving refugees and to cover the cost of the Hungarian church’s regular deliveries of supplies to Ukraine, UMCOR is working with partner ACT Alliance to provide 20,000 people in Hungary with essentials like hygiene items, shelter, food and psychosocial support.

The church in Hungary has helped to house hundreds of refugees fleeing the war. One of those places is Dorcas Summer Camp, where about 178 are living. The camp is run by the municipal government, but the church helps place refugees and provides support. Refugee families get three prepared meals a day, cleaning materials and clothing.

Viktória Ósz-Kiss, the camp’s project coordinator, said they are a different organization, “because we don’t give

just food or clothes but we also organize programs,” adding that some churches visit the camp and lead spiritual programs. They have organized kindergarten classes and in July, launched a “catch-up” educational program for the children with support from UNICEF.

Helping residents find work is one of the priorities at Dorcas Camp. Ósz-Kiss said that outside companies regularly visit and offer possibilities for work. As a result, she said, 70% of the men living there now have jobs.

“They do not just want to survive,” Khaled said. “They would like to find a job and an apartment to rent in order to stand on their own feet. They would like to have their spiritual needs met as well, and they would like to experience fellowship.”

He said the church recently received 500 copies of a Ukrainian youth Bible. Some were passed on to refugees in Hungary and others will be brought to Ukraine along with its regular shipments of humanitarian aid.

As the war drags on, Khaled said the church must think about more long-term ways to help. The church is looking to secure long-term rentals for refugee families, as well as



The Revs. László Khaled (left) and Úllas Tankler (second from left) pray with the family of Robert, Renatta and their children in the small cabin they share at the United Methodist Dorcas church camp in Debrecen, Hungary, where they are staying after fleeing the war in Ukraine. The family is among many Roma who have found a place of welcome at the camp. Khaled is superintendent of The United Methodist Church in Hungary and Tankler is the European/Eurasian representative of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries. Photo by Mike DuBose.

help finding schools and jobs.

“It’s now a deeper solution; it’s resettlement,” he said. “This is the biggest challenge now.”

\*Butler is a multimedia producer/editor for United Methodist News.



## United Voices for Children 2022 Awards



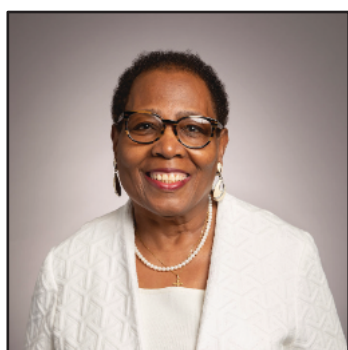
Daniel Lee



Rodney C. Walker



Tasha Greene Cruzat



Vickie Powell-Bass

United Voices for Children is thrilled to announce the 2022 Advocacy Awards to four individuals in the Northern IL Conference and Chicagoland area. The award recipients were honored during UVC’s virtual event on September 13 called *Raising Our Voices Through Resources: A Bridge for the Gap (part 1)*. Thank you to Rev. Chris Winkler, lead pastor at Barrington UMC and Kids Above All board member, who gave the awards during the event.

These award recipients represent ministries and areas of work that continue to address the many needs in diverse communities that affect our kids. Congratulations to:

**Margaret Ann Williams Service Award:** Daniel Lee, the Director of Youth Ministries at Gary UMC, Wheaton, partnering with eight NIC churches to host a youth retreat this fall, and for his continued leadership through the pandemic and fostering faith formation with the youth at Gary UMC.

**Katherine B. Greene Child Advocate Award:** Pastor Rodney C. Walker, Black Methodist Church for Church Renewal (BMCR), for his work in health care across the NIC seeking to connect children and families to health care services in three locations. His

ministry at St. Matthew UMC continues to build bridges between Education Plus and Youth for a Better Future; and Shining Stars, the youth at St. Matthew’s.

**Bishop Jesse R. DeWitt Child Advocacy Award:** Tasha Greene Cruzat, President and Board Member, Children’s Advocates for Change, for the work she does for children and families in Chicagoland and the state of Illinois to ensure that children are safe, healthy, well-educated and safe through policy. She works to ensure that data is reliable, credible and disaggregated by race for the well-being of Illinois children for positive impact.

**Bishop Jesse R. DeWitt Child Advocacy Award:** Vickie Powell-Bass, Lay Leader and Certified Lay Servant, Wesley UMC and United Women in Faith, for her leadership in the local church, NIC, United Women in Faith and the community as a Chicago Public School local school council member advocating for children to help to interrupt the school to prison pipeline for black girls.

Support United Voices for Children through the 5th Sunday Appeal on Oct. 30.

Visit [unitedvoicesforchildren.org](http://unitedvoicesforchildren.org).



## Oak Park church receives green award



(Left) Rev. Jenny Phillips, Senior Technical Advisor for Environmental Sustainability at Global Ministries, presents at the Renewable Energy Summit at Euclid Avenue UMC in Oak Park on Sept. 10. More than 70 people attended in person and online for the event sponsored by the NIC Eco-Sustainability Task Force. (Right) Green Team Award given to Euclid Avenue.



For its work toward becoming NetZero and leading others, Faith in Place awarded Euclid Avenue UMC in Oak Park the 2022 Green Team of the Year award at its recent energy summit.

Faith in Place works with over 250 Green Teams throughout the region. Green teams are groups of three or more people from a House of Worship who provide cooperative leadership to educate, connect, and advocate for healthier communities.

In giving this award, Faith in Place said, “when people of diverse faiths and spiritualities engage with a well-coached Green Team, they are empowered to take action to address environmental and racial injustices within their communities.”

Since 2014, Euclid Avenue has taken the lead in

energy efficiency when they first installed a geothermal heating and cooling system that reduced its carbon footprint by 80%. Following geothermal, Euclid installed a 99-panel solar photovoltaic system on its roof, reducing electricity usage from the grid by 27%.

Not only are Euclid’s efforts saving the planet but also the church’s bottom line. In 2009 Euclid was paying \$13,000 for gas and \$7,000 for electricity. By 2014 gas and electricity had gone from \$20,000 to \$11,500. By adding new solar panels in 2014, electricity bills came in at \$5,300 and gas \$1,500. Now they are adding community solar, which will further reduce the energy bill.

If your church is interested in becoming a green team, visit [umcnic.org/greenteam](http://umcnic.org/greenteam).

# Leading the Laity

Words of encouragement, insight & inspiration from lay leaders



## Creating peace

By Connie Augsburger, NIC Co-Lay Leader

*"Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me!"*

~The UM Hymnal, No. 431

In church on Sunday, we enjoy "sharing" the peace. Of late, many of us have forgone shaking hands and have substituted the hilarious bumping of elbows – or we nod, dip our heads, and smile. However we choose to offer the sentiment, what we are doing is both simple and profound: we offer each other peace – the peace of our Lord.

In John 14:27, Jesus gave us His peace even as He was preparing to die on the cross. We honor His sacrifice and gift whenever we offer peace to one another.

Do we take this peace with us when we leave worship? Do we share this peace as we go about our daily lives? Do we purposefully "pay it forward" as Jesus surely expects us to do?

In June 2020, a friend provided me an opportunity to put my faith in action when they invited me to walk in support of the Black Lives Matter movement – the march was to start and end on the lawn of Oregon UMC in Oregon, Ill., just a few miles from my home. I was both thrilled and a little nervous – would we encounter any trouble? Would other participants behave themselves? [spoiler alert: we did not, and they did!]

But even more to the point – what should my sign say? I didn't have to look far for inspiration: I opened my United Methodist hymnal and copied down the words I found in #481: "Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace; where there is hatred, let me sow love. . . ."

The march was a wonderful experience. It felt good to join with others in our little town to make a statement – a peaceful statement that we care about what happens in the wider world and that we honor and mourn those who have died as a result of racial injustice.

Commonly referred to as "The Prayer of St. Francis," this writing is also known as "the Peace Prayer." While its true origin is unknown, it is nevertheless a lyric and inspiring statement of love, commitment and personal responsibility. When I recite these lines, I feel calm, assured of my strength, and – yes, I feel peace in my heart and my mind: "O Divine master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console. . . ." Reciting these lines helps me to stand a little straighter.

Similarly, singing the song whose title I borrowed helps me to find my resolve and to try to be who and what God wants me to be a good neighbor, a caring friend, and a responsible member of my community. "With every step I take, let this be my solemn vow: to take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally!"

I walked one day two years ago to show my love, but that was just a small beginning. I can, and I must do more. Now is the moment and this is the place: let each of us commit ourselves to live our lives in such a way that Christ's gift of peace will prevail on earth; for "it is in giving that we receive, it is pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life."

Amen

## Fall 2022 Events

### November

#### Platinum Rule Leadership for Changing Time

November 3, 10, and 17, 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Cost: \$99

Learn how to work more effectively with others while increasing your own ability to lead and love even the most challenging people. Build on the strengths of the Golden Rule as you discover the secret power of the Platinum Rule.

Sponsored by the United Methodist Foundation of the Northern Illinois Conference. Cost: \$99. Limited to 18 participants.

Visit [threesimplerules.org/workshops-fall-2022](https://threesimplerules.org/workshops-fall-2022) for details.

#### Tending to the Harvest Worship Service

November 13, 4:00 p.m. (Hybrid Event)

The Discipleship Task Force is delighted to announce the NIC's second Tending to the Harvest fall conference-wide worship service based on Matthew 9:37, "Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few.'"

**Location:** Journey of Hope UMC, 37W040 Highland Ave., Elgin, IL and livestreamed.

**Registration:** All are welcome to register at [umcnic.org/calendar/conference-wide-worship](https://umcnic.org/calendar/conference-wide-worship). (Light reception to follow worship service)

**Guest preacher:** Rev. Dr. Mai-Anh Le Tran from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary.

To learn more about creating IDS in your church, visit [umcnic.org/IntentionalDiscipleship](https://umcnic.org/IntentionalDiscipleship) or email us at [discipleshiptf@umcnic.org](mailto:discipleshiptf@umcnic.org).

#### Town and Rural Festival

November 19, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

**Locations:** Albany UMC 502 First Ave., Albany, IL Keagy and PACK grant recipients will present their ministries. All are welcome to attend.

For more information, visit [umcnic.org/calendar/town-and-rural-festival](https://umcnic.org/calendar/town-and-rural-festival).

#### Facing the Future Virtual Conference

November 16, 12:00 - 6:00 p.m. (Online Event)

**Be Still as a Spiritual Practice:** For Pastors Serving Cross-Racial, Cross-Cultural, and Multicultural Contexts

*"Be still, and know that I am God!*

*I am exalted among the nations;*

*I am exalted in the earth."* - Psalm 46:10

You will learn skills to support the CRCC ministry context, personal self-care, and professional development. You will experience meaningful worship and workshops from sought-after leaders and professionals.

**Registration Cost:** \$60

To register, visit [gcorr.org/facingthefuture2022](https://gcorr.org/facingthefuture2022).

### December

#### Speaker Series: Race, America and the Church

December 1, 12:00 - 1:30 p.m. (Hybrid Event)

**Called:** Doing God's Work for the Beloved Community

**Speaker:** Dr. Drew G.I. Hart

Drew G. I. Hart is an author, activist, and professor in theology in the Bible and Religion department at Messiah University with ten years of pastoral experience. He will address what the local church can do to combat the continuation of racism in the church and in society.

For registration and more information, visit [umcnic.org/2022speakerseries](https://umcnic.org/2022speakerseries).

#### Vital Partnership Workshop

December 3, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

**Location:** The Center United Methodist Church, 400 N. Walnut St., Itasca, IL

**Speaker:** Dirk Elliott, Dir. of Congregational Vibrancy and Leadership Development for the Michigan Conference.

Churches come in all forms of health. Attend this workshop and explore new ways your church might become healthier through a partnership.



### Kids Above All Holiday Gift Drive - Nov. 28 - Dec. 13

#### Sponsor a Child

- Make the holiday wishes of a child in one of Kids Above All's programs come true with a \$50 purchase of toys, books, and clothes.

#### Donate a Toy

- The drive needs new, unwrapped toys, games, or books for youth of various ages. Online wishlists from Amazon and Target will be available starting in mid-October to help guide the gift selection process for our children and teenagers.

#### Volunteer in the Toy Room

- The 2022 Toy Room will be at Kids Above All's new "A Better Life Distribution Center," located at 1801 E. Oakton St., Des Plaines, IL 60018. Health and safety measures, including masks, may be required.
- Contact Catherine Inserra at [cinserra@kidsaboveall.org](mailto:cinserra@kidsaboveall.org) to learn more and set up a time to volunteer as an individual or group.



## RISE UP! AND and Reveal God's grace

Laity Sunday 2022 - October 16  
2 Tim 1:8-12



### Laity Sunday

This year's Laity Sunday falls on Oct. 16. The theme is RISE UP! - and Reveal God's grace (2 Tim 1:8-12). Under the call to Rise Up, laity in the current quadrennium will continue to echo the invitation of this passage: to Rise Up and revive God's gift of faith (that first lived in those who loved us); to Rise Up and reveal the grace in Christ that destroys death and brings life; to Rise Up and remain committed to sound teaching with faith and love; to Rise Up and retain this reliable gift of good and beautiful things placed in our trust by the Holy Spirit. For resources, visit [umcdiscipleship.org/equipping-leaders/lay-ministry](https://umcdiscipleship.org/equipping-leaders/lay-ministry).



# DYK DID YOU KNOW?



## All about bishops

Rev. Arlene Christopherson, Asst. to the Bishop/Dir. of Connectional Ministries

This fall, the United Methodist Church will elect new bishops. In the past, bishops were elected following a General Conference and assigned to their Episcopal Areas on September 1 of that same year. Due to the delay in holding a General Conference, special attention was required to care for this vital component of our UM structure. Over the past two years, bishops have retired or gone on medical leave. Sixteen active bishops and four retired bishops are now filling in the gap, serving multiple conferences or returning from retirement, as is the case for Northern Illinois with Bishop John L. Hopkins.

With mounting pressure, as more bishops reach retirement age prior to a now projected 2024 General Conference, decisions were made to elect and assign bishops this fall while also anticipating more retirements and elections in the summer of 2024.

In the United Methodist Church, we are led by a Council of Bishops. The United Methodist Council of Bishops is made up of 66 active as well as additional retired bishops. The Council of Bishops meets bi-annually to shepherd the work of the denomination. The Council is further divided into geographic areas. The Northern Illinois Conference is in the North Central Jurisdiction. There are five jurisdictions in the United States and 20 episcopal areas outside the U.S. Before the pandemic, the North Central Jurisdiction was made up of nine bishops and ten conferences with one shared episcopal area; the Dakotas and Minnesota. Jurisdictional bishops as a group are referred to as The College of Bishops.

Bishops are ordained Elders in the church elected for life by jurisdictional delegates. While every Elder in the church is eligible to be elected as a bishop, it is common for each annual conference to endorse a candidate from among their elders for this calling. In addition, any elder can declare their candidacy for the position. To learn

more about the candidates in the NCJ, visit [ncjumc.org](http://ncjumc.org) and click on the *We Press On* logo.

The jurisdictional conferences across the U.S. will meet to elect bishops on November 2-5. Our North Central Jurisdictional Conference will gather in Fort Wayne, Ind.

A formula based on membership determines the number of bishops each jurisdiction will receive. When a bishop retires, the jurisdiction elects a replacement. With changes in membership, some jurisdictions are voluntarily moving to a smaller pool of bishops to serve their area. The South Central Jurisdiction will elect three rather than four new bishops, the Southeastern Jurisdiction will elect three rather than five bishops allowed, the Western Jurisdiction plans to hold an election for three bishops and the North Central Jurisdiction (our area) recommends maintaining its number of nine bishops, which would require electing three new bishops this fall. The Northeastern Jurisdiction has not yet determined how many bishops they will elect. Ultimately, each jurisdiction's delegation will determine for themselves how many elections to hold when they convene in November.

Once bishops are elected, a committee of one clergy delegate and one lay delegate from each annual conference in the jurisdiction meets during the jurisdictional conference session to determine episcopal assignments. This committee, called the Jurisdictional Episcopacy Committee, meets with the bishops regularly and reviews a conference profile provided by the annual conference's Episcopacy Committee to better understand the strengths and needs of each area. This group is tasked with matching conference needs and episcopal strengths. Episcopal assignments are announced at the Consecration Service on the last day of the Jurisdictional Conference. This year's service is scheduled for Saturday, November 5.

Unlike other years, when assignments take effect on

September 1 following the election, episcopal assignments will take effect January 1, 2023. Northern Illinois Conference will receive a newly assigned bishop as Bishop Hopkins returns to retirement. We may receive a newly elected bishop or be assigned one of the six currently serving bishops; these decisions are part of the deliberations in the NCJ Episcopacy Committee.

Please join in praying for the delegations and candidates as this work unfolds in November and we prepare to welcome a new Episcopal leader in the new year.

### NIC Delegation:

#### General Conference (Lay)

- Lonnie Chafin
- Nadia R. Kanhai
- Adrian Hill - Vice Chair

#### General Conference (Clergy)

- Alka Lyall - Chair
- Luis Reyes
- Gregory Gross

#### Jurisdictional Conference (Lay)

- Rita L. Smith
- Jessie Cunningham
- Ronnie Lyall

*Alternates:* Nancy Pendergrass and Mark Manzi

#### Jurisdictional Conference (Clergy)

- Hwa-Young Chong
- Jacques Conway
- Brian Gilbert

*Alternates:* Britt Cox and Rachel Birkhahn-Rommelfanger

#### Episcopacy Committee NIC Members

- Elisa Gatz (Lay)
- Gregory Gross (Clergy)



## Celebrating 50 years of advocacy for women

The United Methodist Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW) marked its 50th anniversary on Sept. 15, celebrating a half-century of advocating for the full inclusion of women in church life as well as helping to promote sexual ethics. The agency is offering five ways to join in the festivities including encouraging its annual conference counterparts to plant a tree.

### Five Ways to Celebrate GCSRW's 50th Anniversary:

- 1. Plant a tree:** We are asking every annual conference COSROW committee around the world to participate in a tree planting ceremony and plant a tree to care for the Earth, to symbolize our continuous growth, and to contribute to our net-zero emissions commitment.
- 2. Host a gathering with your COSROW committee:** If you are not able to plant a tree, we invite you to reflect on Psalm 1:3 and the Angel Oak Tree. Resources

for this gathering include: a reflection, call to worship, scripture, a hymn, and a prayer.

- 3. Donate:** We are asking you to donate \$50 for our 50th anniversary to ensure equality continues to be prioritized in the UMC.
- 4. Send us a birthday message:** We are asking you to share a video telling us 1) what your hopes are for the future of GCSRW 2) how GCSRW has helped you in your faith journey 3) just saying "Happy birthday, GCSRW!"
- 5. Organize and act:** We are asking you to continue your work with your annual conference COSROW Committee and advocate for women leaders, prevent sexual misconduct, monitor your context for representation, compensation and to develop strong communities of support.

Visit [resourceumc.org/gcsrww](http://resourceumc.org/gcsrww) for resources.

### General Assembly *(continued from page 5)*



Bishop Sally Dyck (center) joins faith leaders from around the world during the closing prayer service for the World Council of Churches' 11th Assembly in Karlsruhe, Germany. Photo by Paul Jeffrey/WCC.

In addition, he said, the WCC must continue and do more to make the "voices of the marginalized and neglected" heard so that economic influence or the power and authority of individual churches is not decisive, but rather a culture of inclusion, diversity and equal rights is created.

In a biblical sense, the humility and self-understanding of Jesus to be a servant must be an example, he said. Pillay put forward a vision of a WCC "that not only creates safe space, but also room in which the marginalized have equal rights and in which the voices of the neglected are heard, respected and valued by the community."

*\*Ruof is public relations officer and spokesperson for The United Methodist Church in Germany.*

### Job Openings

For the latest job openings in the Northern Illinois Conference and across the connection, visit [www.umcnic.org/jobs](http://www.umcnic.org/jobs).

### Stay Connected

Sign up for the weekly NIC eNews, Appointment Announcements and Sympathy notices. Visit [www.umcnic.org](http://www.umcnic.org) and scroll down and click on "Sign up for our Newsletter" to enter your name and email.

### Submissions

Please submit items at least two weeks prior to publication date. Include your name, address, email, phone number and name of local church. Space is limited.

Electronic submissions are preferred with high-resolution attached jpegs. Submissions will be edited at the discretion of the Communications staff.

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