

**First Report of the General Synod Nominating Committee
Class of 2029 At Large Nominees to the United Church of Christ Board
Thirty-Fourth General Synod**

The General Synod Nominating Committee presents the slate of nominees for the delegates' consideration. This is a non-compliant slate as we did not meet the guidelines for members under the age of 30 or the lay/clergy ratio. The lay percentage requirement is 66 percent. We were able to meet the criteria at 60%. The slate meets the requirement for all other bylaw criteria related to the composition of the board.

The General Synod Nominating Committee always works diligently to meet these criteria. The pool of candidates applying for elected positions continues to decline with each biennium. This time we had zero applicants in the under 30 category. The number of lay candidates continues to decline even as clergy candidates increase. This year we did not have enough lay applications to meet the criteria.

We also had no lay candidates for the Assistant Moderator/Moderator positions which necessitated re-opening that nomination process. The previous biennium we had one lay candidate for these positions. We have taken measures to increase the visibility of calling for nominations but we need the assistance of the whole church to identify candidates who are willing to apply for any elected position at General Synod.

One other consideration is geographic diversity. Those numbers by region for the current board and current nominees are as follows:

Great Lakes 6
Mid Atlantic 7
New England 5
Southern 2
West Central 6
Western 9

As chair of the General Synod Nominating Committee, I would be happy to talk with anyone with questions, shared experience, or ideas about the nomination process.

June Boutwell
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BIOGRAPHIC STATISTICS

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST BOARD

United Church of Christ Board

(35 At-Large Positions)

| | Count | Board Percentages |
|--|-------|-------------------|
| Gender non-conforming | 1 | 2.9% |
| Woman, both transgender and cisgender | 21 | 60.0% |
| Man, both transgender and cisgender | 13 | 37.1% |
| Non-binary | 0 | 0.0% |
| | | |
| Authorized Minister or Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing | 14 | 40.0% |
| Lay Males | 7 | 20.0% |
| Lay Females | 14 | 40.0% |
| | | 0.0% |
| African American | 15 | 42.9% |
| Hispanic | 3 | 8.6% |
| Native American | 0 | 0.0% |
| Pacific Island | 0 | 0.0% |
| Asian American | 3 | 8.6% |
| Total People of Color | 21 | 60.0% |
| European American | 14 | 40.0% |
| | | |
| 60+ | 14 | 40.0% |
| 50-59 | 4 | 11.4% |
| 40-49 | 6 | 17.1% |
| 30-39 | 7 | 20.0% |
| 19-29 | 4 | 11.4% |
| Youth | 0 | 0.0% |
| | | |
| Disability | 8 | 22.9% |
| LGBTQAI+ Community | 13 | 37.1% |

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Judith Booker is a proud member of Plymouth United Church of Christ, Detroit, MI, and currently serves as the Board President of the Michigan Conference United Church of Christ. As a member of the Conference's Faith Formation Mission Area Team and Prophetic Integrity Mission Area Team, Judith is honored to serve a wider community regarding church growth and social justice issues. She serves the United Church of Christ as a member of the Committee on Ministry, Detroit Metropolitan Association. During the Michigan Conference's recent pursuit for a Transitional Conference Minister, Judith led the process as the Chair of the Search Committee. In addition to her current leadership roles, she was the Moderator of the Detroit Metropolitan Association as well as the Michigan Conference UCC. She continues to champion the Michigan community as a Board member of the Emergency Food and Shelter Program through the United Way for twenty years.

Motivated by a desire to give more to her local church, Judith made the key decision to join the Deacon Board and to later become its President. The fulfillment that she received from that ministry led her toward the Revelation Dance Ministry, where she received the deepest sense of joy and peace. In this creative space, God made room for her additional gifts and talents. Her work as an interior designer for homes, department stores, office buildings, and Detroit Public School spaces, prepared her to be a contributing designer for many of her group's liturgical dance garments.

Women, both Transgender and Cisgender, 60+, Layperson (Not Ordained), Black/African American, Michigan Conference

Deborah Dee Brayton is a lifetime member of St. Albans Congregational Church UCC, located in St. Albans Queens, New York. This Servant Leader has served in many positions in her local church, Association, Conference and Nationally in the denomination. Currently she serves on the Board of the Directors of the New York Conference. She is a member of the New York State Department of Health Faith Communities Project AIDS Institute and a Lifetime Member of Girl Scouts of the USA. Deborah Dee is the First Vice President of the United Black Christian and Editor of UBC's e-newsletter Harbari Gani. She is also a member of the Council for Racial and Ethnic Ministries (COREM). She has a Masters of Social Work degree from Hunter College School of Social Work. Deborah Dee Brayton is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker recently retired after 40 years of service with New York City Health and Hospital Corporation. Her vocation as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker has been a blessing for her church and community as she continues to provide needed resources and advocate for holistic care for all persons.

Women, both Transgender and Cisgender, 60+, Layperson (not ordained), Black/African American, Disability, UBC, New York Conference

Sana Delcorazon is a student at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities pursuing a Masters in Divinity and is a Member in Discernment with Tabernacle United Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Sana serves on the board of the Colectivo Latinx Ministries and Encuentros Latinx and co-chairs the UCC student group at United. Sana holds a Masters in Public Affairs from Princeton University and a Masters in Clinical Social Work from Smith School for Social Work. She has trained as a spiritual director with Still Harbor and has worked in social services and community mental health. She is interested in the evolution of the church and the intersection of racial justice, queer theology, reconciliation, and the beloved community.

Women, both Transgender and Cisgender, 40-49, Layperson (Not Ordained), Hispanic/Latino/Latina, LGBTQAI Community, Colectivo de UCC-Latinx, Pennsylvania Southeast Conference

Daniel Doty was baptized and confirmed in the United Church of Christ. Dan attended Bowling Green State University (OH) where he earned a bachelor's degree in Music Education. He taught music in the public schools of Ohio for four years before answering his call to ministry.

Dan earned his MDiv degree from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary (Evanston, IL.) Dan served UMC churches in Illinois and Ohio. Upon receiving Privilege of Call in the UCC, Dan served as Senior Minister of Trinity UCC (Wadsworth, OH) and The Bath Church (Akron, OH). He served as Interim Minister of the Westerville Community UCC (Westerville, OH.)

Dan taught in lay speaking schools and for the Northeast Ohio School of Ministry. He specializes in Hymnody/Worship, Biblical Interpretation and New Testament. He also taught "In the Footsteps of Paul," a course developed from his sabbatical trip to Turkey.

Dan is actively involved in Kirchengemeinschaft and currently serves as the co-chair of the UEK Forum for the national setting.

He is the author of a two-article series "Last Supper, Lord's Supper" published in *Sacramental Life* (OSL Publications.)

Dan is a classically trained opera singer and lived in Italy and sings with symphonies and community bands throughout the Midwest. In May of 2017 he made his singing debut in Carnegie Hall NYC.

Currently Dan serves as the Senior Minister at First Congregational Church of Tallmadge. Dan lives in Wadsworth with his wife Amy and is the proud father of two daughters Kristian and Kaetlyn, a newlywed son Sean and daughter-in-law Sara.

Men, both Transgender and Cisgender, 50-59 Holds Ministerial Standing, White/European American, Heartland Conference

Jimmy Leon Gibbs is a lifelong resident of the Cary/Raleigh North Carolina area earning accolades in vocal performance. He pursued additional degrees and is a non-practicing RN. He has worked in radio, television, and print media as a reporter, on air personality, and creator of the show “Snapshot” on WRAL-TV, Raleigh, NC. He has had long careers at Marriott Corporation, The Herald Sun and IBM. His passions are HIV education, scientific research, and community engagement.

He is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ and is a certified interim minister. In 2023, he was appointed as a Police Chaplain with the Raleigh Police Department.

He serves on both the Eastern North Carolina Association Board and the Southern Conference Board of Directors and the personnel committee of the United Church of Christ.

He currently serves as Vice President of the Affordable Community Residence Association Board (ACRA), and President Emeritus. ACRA provides housing and supportive services for people living with disabilities and HIV.

He is the former longtime secretary of the He is currently Chair of the National Center for AIDS Research Community Advisory Board CAB

He serves as a healthcare and business consultant, intentional interim minister, and community engagement strategist.

He lives in Raleigh with his partner Anthony Woodward and their two fur babies TommyCat and Nutmeg.

Gender non-conforming, 60+, Holds Ministerial Standing, Black/African American, Disability, LGBTQAI Community, MRSEJ, Open and Affirming Coalition, UCC Disabilities Ministry, UCC Mental Health Ministries, UBC, Southern Conference

Cean James is the Senior Pastor of Salt & Light, an interdenominational, intergenerational congregation worshipping and working in Southwest Philadelphia and Mt. Airy. In 2005, Pastor James planted Grace Christian Fellowship (GCF) as a nondenominational church to serve the poorest, sickest, and least educated section of Philadelphia: Southwest Philadelphia. GCF united with the United Church of Christ in 2012 and also planted a satellite congregation in Mt. Airy, that same year.

In 2020, GCF merged with New Spirit Community Church to form Salt & Light. Even though the merger was finalized during the pandemic, Salt & Light has experienced exponential growth and is now a 1000+ -member congregation. Salt & Light is as a congregation of passionate worship, empowered leadership, warm hospitality, intergenerational ministries, and generous missionary work in the community and beyond.

Rev. James completed his undergraduate studies at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University with a BS in biology and received his Masters of Divinity from the Lutheran

Theological Seminary of Philadelphia. Pastor James has also done doctoral work at Lancaster Theological Seminary.

Pastor James also serves the wider church as the Associate Conference Minister of Congregational Development for the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference, UCC. Pastor James is the Director of the CityLights Network, a capacity-building nonprofit in Southwest Philadelphia. Pastor James is also a board member of United Lutheran Seminary, The Common Place, and Chestnut Hill Youth Sports Association.

Men, both Transgender and Cisgender, 40-49, Holds Ministerial Standing, Black/African American, Disability, LGBTQAI Community, UBC, MRSEJ, UCC Mental Health Ministries, Pennsylvania Southeast Conference.

Marcia Keese is a member of Fellowship Congregational UCC in Tulsa, OK. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Tulsa and a Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy from Southern Nazarene University. After a 20+ year career building services and supports for children/youth and families with emotional and behavioral health needs, Marcia's passion and priorities shifted from focusing on clients/consumers to supporting employees. Her present focus is helping to create a corporate culture that values diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, learning, and development. Currently, she is the Chief Learning and Diversity Officer for a large comprehensive community behavioral health center in Eastern Oklahoma. Marcia is a Licensed Professional Counselor, Registered Play Therapist, and Certified Diversity Executive. She is also an adjunct professor at Tulsa Community College, where she teaches in the Human Services Department.

Women, both Transgender and Cisgender, 40-49, Layperson (not ordained), Black/African American, Disability, Kansas-Oklahoma Conference

Ann (Therese) Ortíz (she/her) is the Associate Pastor at Glenside UCC and serves as a founding co-chair of the Racial Justice Initiative of the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference. A bi-vocational minister, A.T. has been an associate pastor for 20 years. She has worked on behalf of socio-economic justice with a variety of communities and community-based organizations throughout her career. She is the Associate Dean for Equity, Inclusion, and Community Life at Bryn Mawr College. Prior to her work at Bryn Mawr, A.T. spent 17 years on the leadership team of a local nonprofit organization in Philadelphia where she worked closely with low-income, first generation to college students and their families as they navigated the challenges of preparing for and completing college. A.T. has served in a variety of professional roles as educator, facilitator, and consultant around cross-cultural competencies, anti-racism, and other areas related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. A proud Latinx from Santa Fe, NM, A.T. has worked in a number of urban and rural communities in the Southwest, West, and Eastern United States. A.T. holds a specialized Ed.M. in Human Development and Psychology from Harvard University and an M.A. in Holistic Spirituality from Chestnut Hill College. She earned her B.A. in English, B.S. in Psychology, and graduated with an emphasis in Ethnic Studies from Santa Clara University.

Women, both Transgender and Cisgender, 50-59, Holds Ministerial Standing, Hispanic/Latino/Latina, LGBTQAI Community, Pennsylvania Southeast Conference

Michael J. Readinger retired from The Council for Health and Human Service Ministries, United Church of Christ in April 2022. He was called to the role of President & CEO in November of 2014. He previously served as CHHSM's vice president from February 2005 to November 2014, after working at Morgan Stanley in Cleveland, where he was an associate vice president/financial advisor for 12 years. Prior to his work in financial services, Mike was involved in a number of entrepreneurial endeavors in the restaurant and club industry, specializing in management accounting systems.

Mike holds a BA in psychology from Case Western Reserve University and an MBA in finance from Cleveland State University. Mike is recognized as a CHHSM Diakonal Minister, having graduated from the Faith Based Leadership Institute in 2006. He is also a 1995 graduate of United Way's Leadership Development Program Cleveland.

Mike previously served on the United Church of Christ Board, the National Benevolent Association Board of Trustees, and the Western Reserve Association (Living Waters Association) investment advisory committee. Previous service includes Moderator of Amistad Chapel United Church of Christ, board member and chair of United Church Funds, board chair of the Cleveland Synergy Foundation, and board chair of the AIDS Taskforce of Greater Cleveland. Mike is a member of Lakewood Congregational Church and splits his time between Cleveland, Ohio and Palm Springs, California with his husband Bob Vinkler.

Men, both Transgender and Cisgender, 60+, Layperson (Not ordained), White/European American LGBTQAI Community, Heartland Conference

Gregory Sato is a member of Central Union Church in Honolulu, Hawaii, where he is currently a leader on the council and serves on a number of committees. He is an attorney with Kobayashi, Sugita & Goda, LLP, practicing in the area of labor and employment. He currently serves as the president of the board of trustees for Hanahauo'oli School, is a member of the board of directors of Asset School, and is a hearing officer for the Hawaii Office of Disciplinary Counsel. His past service has included serving on the board of directors for Hawaii Public Radio, the Hawaii Girl Scout Council, the Hawaii Chamber of Commerce, and other service organizations. Greg enjoys spending time with his parents, his wife, and four adult children, as well as his senior dog, at his home in Hawaii, where he is continuously inspired by the view and the sounds of the ocean—which surely means God is speaking. He looks forward to hearing the stories of God's blessings from others on the UCCB.

Men, both Transgender and Cisgender, 60+, Layperson (Not Ordained), Asian/Asian American, Hawaii Conference

Katharine (Kate) West is the pastor of Park Center UCC and First Congregational UCC in Antelope County, Nebraska. A graduate of Transylvania University and Lexington Theological Seminary, Kate is passionate about rural communities. From disaster recovery to social justice advocacy, Kate seeks to find ways to reach people where they are to share God's radical hospitality and love. As a member of the Nebraska Conference and Tri Conference Board of Directors, Kate works to strengthen the UCC on all levels and to support laity, clergy, and congregations as they transition into the Kin-dom of God.

Women, both Transgender and Cisgender, 40-49, Holds Ministerial Standing, White/European American, Nebraska Conference

Andrew Williams hopes to inspire and engage all people through invitational and intergenerational congregational ministry. He is the Pastor of United Community Church UCC in St. Johnsbury, Vermont. Andrew has served congregations along the California Coast, in the Southwest, and in New England.

Andrew has a passion for social justice ministry and has been involved in advocacy on Capitol Hill and at the United Nations. He previously has served as a Campus Minister at the University of California, Irvine and Arizona State University. Andrew was ordained in the Southwest Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Andrew received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Philosophy from Rockhurst University, Jesuit, and a Graduate Certificate in Religion, Activism, and Social Justice from Claremont School of Theology. Andrew is presently continuing his learning at Boston University School of Theology where he studies Religious and Public Leadership.

Andrew and his husband Ashton live in St. Johnsbury, Vermont. Andrew is a vegetarian of 20 years and enjoys running, hiking, traveling, and dining out.

Men, both Transgender and Cisgender, 30-39, Holds Ministerial Standing, White/European American, LGBTQAI Community, Vermont Conference