

**REPORT OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST BOARD REGARDING THE  
NOMINATION OF THE CANDIDATE FOR  
ASSOCIATE GENERAL MINISTER**

On January 12, 2026, the United Church of Christ Board voted to nominate and recommend to the General Synod the election of Rev. Jennifer Sowell for an unexpired term as Associate General Minister of the United Church of Christ, and submits its nomination for consideration by the delegates to the Special Meeting of the Thirty-Fifth General Synod, meeting May 9 virtually. The report of the search committee is attached.

Heather E. Kimmel  
General Counsel and Corporate Secretary  
April 3, 2026

## Report of the AGM Love of Church Search Committee to the UCCB

### Committee Members:

Rev. Cean James, Search Committee Chair and Vice Chair of the UCCB  
Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson, General Minister and President and CEO  
Ann-Theresa (A.T.) Ortiz, Board Member  
Courtney Dobbins, Board Member  
Rev. Dr. Davena Jones, Conference Minister of the Northern California/Nevada Conference  
Bret Bicoy, Board Member

### Committee Staff:

Alisa Lewis, Chief Human Resources Officer  
Heather Kimmel, General Counsel

The search process was carried out in accordance with the mandates established in the UCC Bylaws which call for an open search process. The search opened on August 8<sup>th</sup> and closed on September 30<sup>th</sup>.

The AGM position opening was shared broadly across the life of the church including local community organizations, a variety of online career sites, the UCC website, Ministry Opportunities, and LinkedIn.

Fourteen completed applications were received. Of those fourteen applicants, twelve moved forward for consideration by the Search Committee.

### A summary of the committee's evaluation process:

The committee used a scoring rubric with defined criteria along with the candidates' resume, cover letter, and writing sample to evaluate and rate those moving forward to first level Zoom interviews.

- a. The number of candidates interviewed:  
Four candidates were interviewed via Zoom, three candidates were interviewed in person. In-person interview candidates were asked to provide a three-part presentation and respond to a broad range of interview questions by the committee for final evaluation.
- b. In the in-person interviews each candidate demonstrated their ability to develop a meaningful devotion, their understanding of the Love of Church team, their understanding of the GMP's vision and priorities, and answered several questions about the broad range of this work and personal spirituality that is applicable to the position.
- c. Each of the three candidates had positive and negative attributes to their interviews, but were well prepared and the committee was able to make an informed decision about who was the best candidate, at this time, for the position.

From the in-person interviews, the committee presents **Rev. Jennifer Sowell** as our recommended candidate for the position of Associate General Minister for Love of Church.

Rev. Cean R. James, Chair