

2015

CLERGY AND LAY NOMINEES

As General and Jurisdictional Delegates from the Memphis Conference

**CLERGY NOMINEES**

**Eddie Bromley**

Charge: Calvert City

District: Paducah

Current positions of church leadership: District BOM, Conference BOM, Chair of Third Place Ministries, Paducah District Leadership Team, Generative Leadership Academy Leadership Team

*What do you feel qualifies you to be a delegate to General and/or Jurisdictional Conference?*

Pastor for 17 years, Founding pastor of Grace UMC, Educated at Asbury Seminary, MTS, and Middlesex University (London), have held various leadership roles on the Local, District & Conference level.

**Cynthia D Davis**

District Superintendent

District: McKendree

Current positions of church leadership: D.S.; dCOM; Conf. Board of Pensions; CMT, personnel & finance committees; Wesley Sr. Ministries and Wesley Foundation, Hannah's Hope, Strategic Mapping Team, Nominations

*What do you feel qualifies you to be a delegate to General and/or Jurisdictional Conference?*

FACT-Financial Advisory and Consulting Team. Responding constructively to results by forward leaning into what that means as a district. Worked over past four years increasing knowledge of the workings of the church; served as recorder at last General Conference with the GBHM; have attended several jurisdictional and general conferences volunteering as needed.

**Steven Louis Douglas**

Charge: East Trinity-Beech Bluff-Mt. Pleasant Parish District: Jackson

Current positions of church leadership: Memphis Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, Jackson District Board of Ordained Ministry

*What do you feel qualifies you to be a delegate to General and/or Jurisdictional Conference?*

I submit my 30+ years of pastoral care in the Memphis Annual Conference as a qualification to serve as a delegate to General and/or Jurisdictional Conference. I have also served on various boards and agencies in the Annual Conference. I care about the future of the United Methodist Church.

**Autura Eason-Williams**

Charge: Capleville

District: McKendree

Current positions of church leadership: Vice-Chair of Conference Board of Ordained Ministry; member of Methodist Hospital Faith and Health Board

*What do you feel qualifies you to be a delegate to General and/or Jurisdictional Conference?*

I am a life-long member of The United Methodist Church who has served 20 years in various local church, district, and conference leadership positions. I am an advocate for young people, their ministry and concerns; and I am dedicated to helping shape the present and future United Methodist Church.

**Jonathan L. Jeffords**

Charge: St. John's

District: McKendree

Current positions of church leadership: Chair-Memphis Conference Board of Ordained Ministry. During this quadrennium have served on Memphis Conference FACT Team and the Nashville Area Strategic Mapping Team.

*What do you feel qualifies you to be a delegate to General and/or Jurisdictional Conference?*

I'm lifelong United Methodist. And the Church needs change, reform. Our systems and structures have become unwieldy often inhibiting our capacity to fulfill our mission. I make myself available as a delegate to work for a Church that can adapt, be innovative, and fully open to all God's children.

**Gary D Lawson, Sr.**

Charge Lakeshore Camp & Retreat Center

District: Paris

Current positions of church leadership: Executive Director-Lakeshore UM Assembly; Board of Directors of United Methodist Camp & Retreat Ministries Association; Adjunct Faculty—Drew Theological Seminary; Chair of UMCRM Education Committee

*What do you feel qualifies you to be a delegate to General and/or Jurisdictional Conference?*

As a solid Wesleyan theologian, I have a healthy love for The United Methodist Church, her practices of faith and Social Principles. Having served amidst as ever changing youth & young adult culture over the past 30 years, I am well in tune with what young people are going to require if they (are) going to move with United Methodism into the future. I can represent their voices & the future of the church.

**Sky McCracken**

District Superintendent

District: Paducah

Current positions of church leadership: Various ex-officio positions. Dean of the Memphis Conf. Cabinet. Southeastern Jurisdiction Committee on Investigation.

*What do you feel qualifies you to be a delegate to General and/or Jurisdictional Conference?*

I have been involved in the UMC at local, conference, jurisdictional, and general church levels all my adult life, and love the Church with all my heart. While concerned, I am hopeful about its future. I would consider it a sacred privilege to represent the Memphis Conference as a delegate.

**Michael Pence**

Charge: St. Luke's

District: McKendree

Current positions of church leadership: McKendree District on Ordained Ministry, Nashville Area Committee on Episcopacy, Intentional Discipleship Action Team, Candidacy Mentor

*What do you feel qualifies you to be a delegate to General and/or Jurisdictional Conference?*

I serve a diverse church (racial, theological, economic). I'm young enough (42) to understand the hearts of younger clergy/laity. I have a strong desire to see the UMC move forward while embracing our Wesleyan theology.

**David Russell**

Charge: Dyersburg First UMC

District: Dyersburg

Current positions of church leadership: I am in my fourth year as Memphis Conference Secretary. I served (in this quadrennium) as a member of the Nashville Area Strategic Mapping Team. I am a member of the Intentional Discipleship Action Team in my capacity as Conference Chairperson for Evangelism. I am a 2014 graduate of the Generative Leadership Academy, and currently serve as a table leader for the 2015 Academy.

*What do you feel qualifies you to be a delegate to General and/or Jurisdictional Conference?*

I have served charges in the Memphis Conference since 1981. I served in 2004 and 2012 as a volunteer marshal at General Conference. As such I am knowledgeable about the process of General Conference and service as a delegate. I am Wesleyan in theology and care deeply for The United Methodist Church.

**Gregory Waldrop**

Charge: Fountain Avenue

District: Paducah

Current positions of church leadership: Co-Chair, Order of Elders

*What do you feel qualifies you to be a delegate to General and/or Jurisdictional Conference?*

I listen well. I am committed to church unity. I have 35 years in ministry serving circuits, stations, small membership and mid-town churches. I will advocate for the Lutheran/John Copenhaver option of "bound conscience" in regard to sexuality issues. I promise to follow God's lead in our conferring business!

**LAY NOMINEES****Charles M. Allen**

Charge: Puryear UMC

District: Paris

Current positions of church leadership: Lay Leader, Board, PPR, Scouting Coordinator

*What do you feel qualifies you to be a delegate to General and/or Jurisdictional Conference?*

With the Methodist Church becoming increasingly international, possibly my 8 year spent working in Africa & Middle East may be helpful. Delegate is an extension of my commitment to advance our church.

**Elyse Bell**

Charge: Paris First UMC

District: Paris

Current positions of church leadership: I currently serve the Memphis Conference as the Lay Resource Leader for the Paris District, providing leadership and resources in mission and ministry for 71 local congregations and 42 clergy. I am a six year ex-officio member of the Murray Wesley Foundation Board representing the Connectional Ministries Team Office, a board member of the newly organized Bethel Wesley Fellowship in McKenzie, a member of the Memphis Conference Outreach and Advocacy Team, and the CMT Disaster Relief Committee. I am a founding member of the Pacto Committee in our covenant relationship with Mexico and a member of the leadership team for the Generative Leadership Academy. For the past ten years, I have co-led Volunteers In Mission Teams to Sierra Leone, New Orleans, Mexico, Costa Rica and Haiti.

*What do you feel qualifies you to be a delegate to General and/or Jurisdictional Conference?*

I have experience in the United Methodist Church at the local, district, conference, regional and international level. My passion extends to those on the margins of church and society. As one among many who deeply love the church, I desire to give leadership toward unity in the body of Christ.

## **Sandra Burnett**

Charge: Lone Oak UMC

District: Paducah

Current positions of church leadership: Sunday School teacher; Stephen Minister; Certified Lay Servant; Conf. Board of Ordained Ministry; Conf. Chair Outreach Action Team; Dist. UMW President

*What do you feel qualifies you to be a delegate to General and/or Jurisdictional Conference?*

I will:

- Pray for the UMC, the conferences, and the issues presented.
- Pray for wisdom and discernment among delegates.
- Stay informed on denominational issues, discussions, and legislation.
- Commit to reading and studying all legislative proposals.
- Listen to and learn from voices on all sides of issues.

## **Solomon Christian**

Charge: Good Shepherd UMC

District: Asbury

Current positions of church leadership: **Local Church:** Lay Leader, Adult Sunday school Teacher, Certified Lay Minister, Certified Lay Speaker, Mission Outreach Coordinator, and instrumental in establishing Hispanic ministry. **Annual Conference:** Delegate, UMM Prayer Advocate; Founder and Coordinator of “Dental Care for the World” project which has established “Dental Nurse Practitioner” training program in Liberia and is working to establish the same program in East Congo Episcopal Area. **General Church:** \*\*Member of Board of Directors of General Board of Church and Society (2012-2020); \*\*Board member of National Federation of Asian American United Methodists (2012-2020); \*\*Vice-President of South Asian National Caucus of United Methodists (2012-2020); \*\*First Lay alternate member of Judicial Council (2004-2008); \*\*Delegate and alternate delegate to General Conferences and Southeast Jurisdictional Conferences, (2000, 2004, 2008, 2012); \*\*Coordinator of dental mission work with UMVIM, SEJ and GBGM, (1987-present).

*What do you feel qualifies you to be a delegate to General and/or Jurisdictional Conference?*

I believe that to keep our UMC alive we need to strengthen small congregations; to make our connection stronger at home and abroad; to engage in God’s mission; and to adhere to Christian core values. While representing our Conference, I have voiced these issues and will continue to do so.

## **William (Will) Clark**

Charge: Lambuth Memorial UMC

District: Jackson

Current positions of church leadership: Certified Candidate for Ordination as an Elder, Class Representative at Duke Divinity Student Council, Chaplain Candidate (2<sup>nd</sup> LT) U.S. Army, Rising 2<sup>nd</sup> year student at Duke Divinity.

*What do you feel qualifies you to be a delegate to General and/or Jurisdictional Conference?*

Ever since I became a Methodist, I feel I have been called to lead. Without Methodism, I am not a Christian. That calling drives me to lead and represent you in this time. I seek to represent all people of our Annual Conference, and so that all voices of all people may be heard. Even if you do not support me, and I gain the nomination I will work hard to earn your support.

## **Isabelle Dillard**

Charge: St. John's UMC

District: McKendree

Current positions of church leadership: Annual Conference delegate; member of Wesley Connection & Multifaith Initiative at Millsaps College; United Methodist Leadership Scholarship with UMHEF.

*What do you feel qualifies you to be a delegate to General and/or Jurisdictional Conference?*

Throughout my life, the UMC has instilled in me a passion to serve & to love. I now strive to pour these spiritual gifts back into our community. As a young female leader in the church, I can lend a much-needed perspective to the discussions our denomination faces today as we work together to fulfill our call in the greater world.

## **David R. Reed**

Charge: Martin First UMC

District: Dyersburg

Current positions of church leadership: Memphis Conference Lay Leader. Board of Directors United Methodist Men Foundation. Vice President of United Methodist Foundation for the Memphis and TN Conferences. Nashville Area Episcopal Committee. Co-founder & Board of Directors of GodStory, Inc.

*What do you feel qualifies you to be a delegate to General and/or Jurisdictional Conference?*

I want to represent you. I understand the complex issues facing our denomination. I represented the Memphis Conference at the last two General Conferences as your Delegate or Alternate Delegate. I have served as Lay Leader for a Local Church, a District and currently, for the Memphis Conference.

## **Delores Smith**

Charge: Milan First UMC

District: Brownsville

Current positions of church leadership: Conference United Methodist Women's President.

*What do you feel qualifies you to be a delegate to General and/or Jurisdictional Conference?*

I believe the discipline and principles of the United Methodist Church should call us (to) live out Micah 6:8. As an active member for over 30 years, I have strived to act for justice and to show mercy through love. I promise to serve with obedience to God.

## **John W. Thorpe, Jr.**

Charge: Somerville First UMC

District: McKendree

Current positions of church leadership: Lay Delegate to the Memphis Annual Conference, member Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, member Finance Committee (Chairperson, Stewardship). Adult Sunday School Teacher, Certified Local Lay Servant, member food distribution team for local ministry.

*What do you feel qualifies you to be a delegate to General and/or Jurisdictional Conference?*

I believe my experience serving in multiple churches, in different conferences coupled with my professional training and experience in organizational leadership has prepared me for representing our conference at the General/or Jurisdictional Conference. Experience in Conflict Resolution at the state and international levels has provided me with skills in discernment and leadership. It would be a privilege to represent the conference at the general/jurisdictional levels.

## **Deborah Watlington**

Charge: Lambuth Memorial UMC

District: Jackson

Current positions of church leadership: Director of Education and Outreach, Wesley Foundation Board member, Nurture/Education/Spiritual Formation committee, Missions committee, Financial Board member, Spiritual Leadership Team

*What do you feel qualifies you to be a delegate to General and/or Jurisdictional Conference?*

I would be a delegate open to the movement of the Holy Spirit as we work on critical matters facing the UMC. I have thoroughly studied the complex issues to be addressed, been an active UM member for 35 years and believe we need visionary leaders who stay true to the scripture.