

**NOMINATING BIOGRAPHIES FOR
ELECTION OF DELEGATES TO GENERAL AND JURISDICTIONAL CONFERENCE**

Clergy

1. DAVID ABBOTT

NH District Superintendent 2010–present – Belfast UMC Pastor 1996-2010 – General Conference Delegate 2012 – Areas of passion: Sharing God’s grace with all, Congregational transformation, smaller membership churches, lay and clergy leadership development, creating authentic church for today – Inspired by the Holy Spirit, I am told I am a moderate with whom people of all theologies feel they can speak and be heard. My prayer is to find a way for all people to come together and “commune in the chasm”, to serve God and neighbor as one body, being the diverse loving presence of Christ in today’s world.



2. THOMAS W. BENTUM

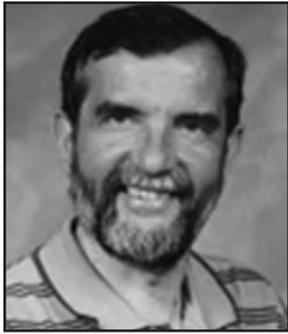
Tom grew up in Calais, Maine in a family whose Methodist roots date back generations. He was approved as a candidate for ministry at age 17 and graduated from West Virginia Wesleyan College and Asbury Theological Seminary. In 1992 he was ordained and has served fulltime in churches in New England for 23 years. In 2011, he was elected as alternate to Jurisdictional Conference. He currently serves on the delegation as well as serving on the Board of Ordained Ministry. Tom’s passion is the renewal and reformation of the United Methodist church and has worked toward that end since college.



3. DAVID CALHOUN

David has served the church in Colorado, Nebraska, Maine, and Massachusetts. He is currently District Superintendent in the Connecticut and Western Massachusetts District. David has served on a variety of Conference Boards, District Committees, task forces, and has an understanding of the strengths and challenges of our church. For 23 years, he served in two annual conferences as an assistant to the Conference Secretary. He is trained in mediation, and has a passion for social justice. He has the ability to work respectfully with others even in disagreement, and would be honored to represent our conference as a delegate.





4. WILLIAM (SCOTT) CAMPBELL

Scott Campbell is a three-time delegate to General Conference. He teaches UM Polity at Harvard and is a specialist in judicial process. He successfully defended Dr. Thomas Ogletree, recently won a reversal of the defrocking of Rev. Frank Schaefer, and consulted on more than a dozen other cases. He is a director of the Board of Church and Society and represented New England on the Jurisdictional Structure Task Force. He will advocate for the preservation of fair process rights for clergy and support structural reforms offering greater regional autonomy as our best hope for maintaining the unity of the church.



5. WE CHANG

Ordained in 1996, We served congregations & communities in MA and NH and is currently a co-pastor of Belmont-Watertown UMC. We is former chair of Conference Board of Church and Society and the Vision Table. Currently a member of the committee on Episcopacy of Northeastern Jurisdiction and chair of New England Justice For Our Neighbors. Delegate to 2008 and 2012 GC and JC. 2016 GC will be a critical gathering for discerning the future identity and mission of our beloved church and I hope to bring to our Holy Conferencing the truthful voices of the voiceless in our church and society.



6. CRISTIAN DE LA ROSA

Cristian is Assistant Professor of Contextual Theology and Practice and Director of Contextual Education and Community Partnerships at BU School of Theology. She is a graduate from the University of The Pacific, Wesley Theological Seminary and Chicago Theological Seminary. She currently serves with the National Association of UM Latina Clergy Women (ACLAMEN), the Massachusetts Council of Churches, The Hispanic Youth Leadership Academy (HYLA) and the National Council of Churches. Her experience with General Conference: Coordinating MARCHA's strategy team, observer, and as faculty for the 2012 General Conference Seminar for BU School of Theology students.

7. LATRELLE EASTERLING

LaTrelle Easterling was honored to represent our Conference as a delegate to both General and Jurisdictional Conferences in 2012. She currently serves the MBH District as Superintendent. LaTrelle was elected to the Programs and Arrangements Committee for the 2016 Jurisdictional Conference and the NEJ Multi-Ethnic Center for Ministry. She serves on the BoOM, and the MBH District Committee on Ministry. LaTrelle is passionate about her faith. As a delegate she would be inspired by Christ to advocate for the marginalized, and committed to prayerfully listen to all voices to serve the present age.



8. BECCA GIRRELL

GC 2012 delegate, worked on Church & Society legislative committee (rewriting the social principle on abortion), lovingly witnessed to the longing for a fully inclusive UMC, helped craft legislation to reinstate Boards / Agencies including GCORR and COSROW after the fall of Plan UMC, and started the continuous, bi-weekly twitter conversation about the UMC's direction, #DreamUMC. I feel I would be an asset to the same legislative committee, or in discussion around worldwide church restructuring. A former member of Troy Conference, I pastor in Lebanon NH, chair Conference Church & Society, co-chair BOOM Recruitment, and love community, blogging, & justice.



9. LEIGH GOODRICH

Leigh Goodrich (Dry) is a member of the Program Council of the Methodist Federation for Social Action, and President of the New England Chapter. She is on the board of Parents Reconciling Network. She serves on the Appeals Committee for Northeast Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church. She sits on the New England Conference Church and Society Committee as the chair of the Reconciling Subcommittee, and is also on the Anti Racism Steering Committee. She works on the Metro Boston Hope District Committee on Ministry. In 2012 Leigh was a delegate to Jurisdictional Conference and an alternate at General Conference.





10. ALTHEA JACKSON

The majority of Althea's life has been in service to the New England area. She holds a B.S. in Speech Pathology and M.Div. Her passion for empowering those at any disadvantage is a motivating factor in her life-work. Althea has served in the RISEM, Southern Maine and the Metro Boston districts. She was involved with the Committee on Race and Religion, the Pastor's Assembly Director's Board and currently serves on the board of Trustee of the United Methodist Elder Care. Althea currently serves Haven United Methodist Church in East Providence, RI.



11. KATHERINE MITCHELL

I am currently serving God's people at Shepherd of the Valley UMC in Hope RI. I went to Boston University School of Theology and was ordained in 2013. I have served on the Conference Leadership Committee, the Methodist Federation for Social Action and the Palestinian Divestment Committee. I am currently on the board of Camp Aldersgate, the RISEM District Committee on Ministry and the Board of Ordination. In my previous career I was a certified mediator and it would be my privilege to apply those skills in representing the New England Conference at this critical time in our church's history.



12. DAVID NICOL

I would be honored serving as a delegate. I have a passion for United Methodist connectionalism and ecumenism. A native of Massachusetts, I have served local churches for the last 9 years, first in Southern Maine, then in Northern Maine. I spent time in Romania, doing mission work in College. I have been privileged to serve on the District Ministry Team, District New Church Start Team, DCOM and Equitable Compensation (currently as chair). I have been blessed by Exploration '96, the GBCS Young Clergy Orientation, and Order of the FLAME (with World Methodist Evangelism).



13. JUNG SUN OH

Ziegler Award preacher in 2013. Balancing personal and social holiness in personal life and ministry settings. Support "Full Inclusion" in UMC. National Board MFSA member. I do not support UMC schism but support "United States as a Central Conference." Clergy Reserve Delegate to Jurisdictional Conference 2000, 2008. Co-facilitator of Provisionary Leadership Academy (2014-16). Proposal writer and Director of Sing a New Song and Prophecy initiative in NEAC (2014-2016). Since 1998, I have worked to improve race relations NEAC through Anti-Racism and Cross Racial/Cross Cultural ministry (Co-Chair) and CORR. Served BoOM, Appointment Task Force, Nomination Committee, Chair of Korean Caucus.

14. RENE A. PEREZ

René is currently serving as DS of the CMA District. Before coming to New England, he served as pastor of the Lititz (PA) UMC, where he led the church in building a medical clinic in Kenya. He has worked with National Plan for Latino Ministries facilitating modules. He is a committed disciple of Jesus Christ who has a vision of Spirit-filled Missional growing churches. While serving in Philadelphia, he was key in having the Annual Conference approve a fully-funded Latino ministry. In 2000, he became Director of the Conference Office responsible for Congregational Development, Ethnic Ministries and New Church Starts.



15. ABRAHAM WAYA

Abraham Waya serves The United Methodist Church in Brockton, MA. He was born and raised in an African evangelical environment and has served as ordained elder in an American progressive environment. General Conference 2016 needs people like Abraham Waya who can speak both the conservative and progressive languages to bridge the widening divide between the two perspectives in the UMC. With a Ph.D. in Military Science, Abraham transitioned from several years of strategic and diplomatic service to pastoral ministry. Abraham and his wife, Larisa, are blessed with Saratu and Abraham.



16. DAVID B. WILLIAMS

I would like to offer myself as a candidate for election as a delegate to the 2016 General Conference. My theologically conservative reading of the Bible has moved me to reflect deeply on issues of justice, inclusion, and holy conferencing. I have pastored churches in both southern and northern Maine and currently serve in Connecticut. I have also served on the Conference Visioning Table and currently serve on the Commission on Equitable Compensation and our District Ministry Team. These varied postings and opportunities have helped me develop a deep appreciation and regard for the richness of our Wesleyan tradition.



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1. ROBERTA BRAGAN

Currently, I serve as President of the NEC United Methodist Women, serve on Church and Society and am a candidate for Deaconess. I have served on NEC Finance & Administration, Bishop's Visioning Table as well as various UMW and CTWMA district positions. I participated in mission work teams to Chile, Tanzania and Philippines. I believe that each person is of equal value and that as Christians we are called to do justice and to action for the least, the last, and the lost. The strongest message we have about our faith is how we live our lives.



2. SEAN DELMORE

As a 2012 Jurisdictional Conference delegate, I was a reserve at GC and assisted with legislation monitoring. I also attended GC 2008, developing a deep understanding of GC processes and forging relationships with UMs across the denomination. Joining the UMC through Cambridge Welcoming Ministries (a former mission of NEAC) led to abiding love of connectional service at local, regional, and denominational levels. A member of NEAC's Committee on Leadership, I currently focus on grassroots leadership development. My work (near home in Lebanon, NH) as a non-profit administrator would make me a useful addition to committees on administration, conferences, or finance.



3. STEVE DRY

Steve Dry is committed to recruiting and developing future leaders of the UMC. After playing a critical role in New Dimensions 2012, he assembled a diverse lay team of young adults to manage New Dimensions 2014, a conference to prepare church leaders for inclusive ministry. Interested in cross-denominational collaboration, he engaged churches, annual conference committees, and national denominational organizations. Steve has volunteered on the New England Visioning Table and for MFSA at General Conference 2012. He graduated from Harvard Divinity School where he led the Methodist Covenant Group and Emory University where he served as a University Worship Deacon.





4. THOMAS GREGORY "GREG" GRAY

As a “cradle Methodist,” born in the North Georgia Conference, I have had many opportunities for service at the local (Stewardship, SPR chair, Administrative Council, Certified Lay Servant), District (Board of Laity, Director of Lay Servant Ministries, Connectional Ministries, At-Large Member of Annual Conference), and Annual Conference (Worship Committee, Committee on Lay Servant Ministries, Leadership (Advocacy) Team) levels of the church. I am a 2014 Master of Divinity graduate of Candler School of Theology, and now am a proud member of Living Faith UMC in Putnam, CT as I complete a Master of Sacred Theology at Boston University STH.



5. WAYNE A. GRIFFETH-HURST

A lifelong Methodist, I was born in Fort Fairfield, Maine. Been attending Annual Conference since 2006 as an Equalization Member. A member of the First United Methodist Church, Bangor, Maine, where I am responsible for worship media, I serve on the Finance Committee, Nominations and Leadership Development, and the Administrative Council. I am certified as a Lay Servant in the Northern Maine District and am currently in the candidacy process for Certified Lay Ministry, and serve on the DMT and the LSM Committee. I also volunteer at Eastern Maine AIDS Network as the food pantry coordinator.



6. OSCAR W. HARRELL

After extensive prayers, discernment and discussions with laity and clergy about the critical needs of the Church and my possible contributions to that process, I have decided to be a candidate for the Delegation. I have been a life-long Methodist member. During that time, I have been blessed to do the Lord’s work in various capacities as Conference Lay Leader for eight years, conference committees, President, NEJ Lay Leaders, National Lay Leaders Executive Committee, NEJ Episcopacy Committee, Board of Directors Preacher’s Aid Society and a very active member of the Sudbury United Methodist Church in Sudbury, Massachusetts.

7. REBECCA HEWETT

Hello, my name is Rebecca Hewett and I am a member of Bourne UMC on Cape Cod. I serve as a RIM Equalization member. I am a Lay Speaker. I am also the NEAC Director of Lay Servant Ministries. I work as a member of the Association of Conference Directors of Lay Servant Ministries Education Committee and work with in GBOD. I served as the first alternate lay delegate to the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference in 2012. I am the Director of Clergy Family Services, South East for the Preachers' Aid Society of New England. Please do consider me. Thank you.



8. BONNIE I. MARDEN

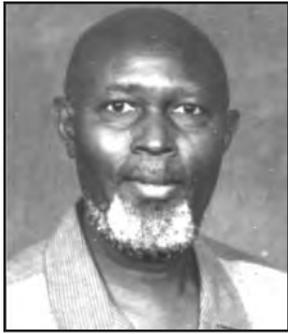
Celebrating God's generosity, Bonnie offers stewardship education through the New England Foundation and chairs NEJ Committee on Episcopacy. Leading previous Lay delegations provided denominational knowledge about changes underway as we become a more global church. Her skills include managing changes to revitalize congregational missions and adapt to global realities. Leadership experiences include the Imagine No Malaria campaign, Parish Consulting, NEAC Choreographer, SOCM Dean, Conference Nominating, District Superintendency Committee Rolling Ridge and Mechuwana ministries, Maine CCYM Chair. "Representing New England and continuing the leadership we bring to the global church through these Conferences is an honor." Member Aldersgate UMC, Chelmsford, MA



9. KEVIN M. NELSON

I am interested in serving as a delegate because I am passionate about working toward the UMC being characterized by our Wesleyan heritage, Christ's teachings and example, and being a place where all people can find a spiritual home. I want to work to ensure that the UMC is organized effectively for carrying out this work. I am a devoted follower of Jesus, John Wesley, and MLK, and I want to represent the interests of the NEAC. My special contributions to the delegation would include my experience, great depth of knowledge of the UMC, and my contacts across the connection.





10. RALPH R. R. ODUOR

Conference Secretary of NEC – Married to the Rev. Ruth Oduor. Ralph served as District Lay Leader of MBH, Chairperson of Crossroads Emmaus Board of Directors 2006–07; on STV in Mission to Namibia, West Angola, Palestine and DEMM; currently Church Council Chair; was an executive of the Gillette Company, Corporate R&D, for 30 years. He holds a B. A. in Chemistry from the University of New Hampshire and Juris Doctor from Suffolk University; Massachusetts licensed private attorney; Chair 2012 NEJC Session Journal Committee; Delegate and Legislative Committee Vice-Chair 2008 GC, Delegate and Chair 2012 GC Faith and Order Legislative Committee.



11. SPENCER SHAW

Spencer, a recent graduate of Eastern Nazarene College in Quincy, MA, is a certified candidate for ministry in The UMC. A lifelong United Methodist hailing from the Northern Maine District, Spencer came to follow Christ due to the witness of Corinth UMC, Corinth, ME, and soon after began discerning a call to ordained ministry. He was blessed by the opportunity to further discern his call to ministry by attending Exploration 2013 in Denver, CO. In the fall of 2015, Spencer and his wife, Sarah, will be beginning a new journey as he begins his Master of Divinity program.



12. LORENE (RENE) WILBUR

Current Church Affiliation: Tinmouth Community Church UM, Tinmouth, Vermont, Vermont District – Current Conference Position: Conference Lay Leader; Chair of Board of Laity; member of Extended Cabinet; serves on several conference committees; equalization member of annual conference – Previous Conference Service: Chair, Board of Global Ministries; Member of Board of Ordained Ministry and Conference UMW Planning Team – Employment: Retired; served 17 years as Deputy General Secretary/Administration of General Board of Global Ministries – Education: BS in Business Administration, Trinity College Vermont; M. Div., New York Theological Seminary – Other Volunteer Work: Vice-Chair, UM-related Green Mountain College Board of Trustees.

13. CHRISTY WRIGHT

Christy Wright recently completed her first year at Boston University School of Theology as a Masters of Divinity Student. She is a candidate for ordained ministry in the deacon track, and her passion for social justice, community building through reconciliation, and working with youth is evident in her lifestyle and care for others. She currently serves at Sudbury United Methodist as the Director of Youth Ministries. She would love the opportunity to hold high the values of New England at General Conference and wishes to be more involved in the life of the United Methodist Church in a global capacity.

