



Installation Service

10th General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ

Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia A. Thompson

October 20, 2023 @ 5pm
Lakewood Congregational Church
Lakewood, OH

Making All Things New

Gathering

Prelude **Toccata on Amazing Grace**

Processional **Spirit of The Living God**

Welcome Rev. Dr. Andrea Vassell

Land acknowledgement and call to action Rev. Joanna D’Agostino

Lakewood Congregational Church and the greater Cleveland area occupies land which was forcefully ceded by 1100 chiefs and warriors signing the Treaty of Greenville in 1795. Native peoples stewarded this land before us with sacred resilience. They touched it lightly and regarded it as sacred.

We remember and confess the streams of history in the United Church of Christ which were theologically complicit in the ideologies of colonization. We commit again to our ongoing work to renounce the Doctrine of Discovery and theologies of colonization, to examine our relationships to the homelands and tribal nations in which our churches, associations, and conferences dwell, and to move from remembrance and renunciation to concrete, embodied, and ongoing reparative actions and repair of relationships with Native peoples and nations.

Living with respect and healing partnership, we’re called to steward God’s earth, and we also acknowledge the thousands of Native Americans who now, or still, call Northeast Ohio home, especially who continue to face marked health, education, and criminal justice disparities rooted in economic adversity and poor social conditions.



- Drums Papa Assane M'Baye
- Ritual of Libation Rev. Shernell Edney Stilley
- Call to Worship* Rev. Traci Blackmon and Mr. Peter Makari

Behold I Am Making All Things New

From *Stating Our Faith in Urgent Times*, selection by Mary Luti, inspired by Revelation 21:5

One: We believe in God, maker and re-maker of everything that is, in whom there is always more, and more to come.

Many: By God's wonder, work, and will, even the dead find life.

One: We believe in Jesus Christ, maker and re-maker of tables and tales, in whom welcome is wide, feasting is free, and stories speak only of love.

Many: By his words, his weeping, and his wounds, even the lost are found.

One: We believe in the Holy Spirit, maker and re-maker of imagination, who sees over the horizon, beyond the end.

Many: By her urgency and fire, even the truth gets told.

One: Therefore, we believe that everything that dies can be reborn,

Many: All hidden things can come to light,

One: All broken things can be remade,

Many: The empty larder can be filled,

One: All promises gone stale and hard

Many: Can taste like bread again.

One: And we believe that the old, old Story can be re-told to thrill sad hearts like rediscovered love;

Many: And even lost and frightened lambs like me can be retrieved, restored to courage, and declare the truth that makes tyrants tumble and the captives free.

All: This we believe. God help my unbelief.

- Hymn* **God of Grace and God of Glory (TNCH #436)**
- Opening Prayer* Bishop Yvette Flunder
- Prayer Chant* **Holy Spirit**



Word

1st Testament Reading Giovan Watson

Isaiah 43:16-21

they lie down, they cannot rise,
they are extinguished, quenched like a wick:

18 Do not remember the former things,
or consider the things of old.

19 I am about to do a new thing;
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness
and rivers in the desert.

20 The wild animals will honour me, the jackals and the ostriches;
for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert,
to give drink to my chosen people,

21 the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise.

2nd Testament Reading Rev. Dr. Andrea Vassell

Revelation 21:1-5

the first heaven and the sea was no more. **2** coming down out of
heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,
‘See, the home of God is among mortals.

God will dwell with them;
they will be God’s peoples,
and God will be with them;

4 God will wipe every tear from their eyes.
Death will be no more;

mourning and crying and pain will be no more,
for the first things have passed away.’

5 And the one who was seated on the throne said, ‘See, I am
making all things new.’ Also he said, ‘Write this, for these
words are trustworthy and true.’



Introduction of Speaker	Rev. Geoffrey Black
Sermonic Selection	God Is
Sermon	Rev. Merlyn Hyde-Riley
Post Sermonic Selection	Give Me A Clean Heart
Time of prayer	Prayers for peace, the people, the Church, our ecumenical partners, and all creation. Response: “Lord Hear Our Prayers” Rev. Tara Curlewis, Rev. Phil Tanis, Bishop Jeffrey Leath, Bishop Laura Barbins, Rev. Terri Hord Owens

Offering

Rev. Kent Siladi

QR Code for online giving



*Doxology

*Prayer of thanksgiving



Service of Installation

Remarks

Ecumenical Greeting	Bishop Vashti McKenzie
Interfaith Greeting	Huff, Oyasùúrù Ifáwárinwa (Leslye)
CCM Greetings	Rev. Shari Prestemon

Music

Oceans

Introduction of GMP

Mr. Patrick Watson

Installation Rite

Rev. Noah Brewer Wallin

Installation is the action of Associations or Conferences in the United Church of Christ in cooperation with a local church, and in this case with the whole United Church of Christ.

In this installation today we together confirm and celebrate the covenantal relationship among local churches, pastors and teachers, Associations, Conferences and the National setting of the United Church of Christ. Installation is a sign that these covenantal partners are committed to share mutually in the mission of the United Church of and the ecumenical church.

Leaders in today's installation of the Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia A. Thompson as General Minister and President are therefore, the Conference Minister of the Heartland Conference, the Living Water Association Minister, the Senior Pastor of Olmsted Community Church, UCC, the Chair of the United Church of Christ Board of Directors and the Chair of the UCCB Search Committee.

United Church of Christ members

We stand as one body, united in Spirit and inspired by God's grace, we welcome all, love all, and seek justice for all. With Jesus as our guide and surrounded by the saints who have gone before us, today we celebrate God's faithfulness to the United Church of Christ and the Church universal.



Rev. Dr. David Long Higgins, Heartland Conference, Conference Minister

The Heartland Conference of the United Church of Christ greets you in the name of Jesus Christ, head of the Church in heaven and on earth.

United Church of Christ members

To Christ be blessing and honor and wisdom and power, forever and ever!

Ms. Julia Gaughan

The General Synod of the United Church of Christ,
by the Holy Spirit, elected The Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson
to serve as General Minister and President.

We have called Dr. Thompson to serve the whole church
as pastor, prophet, teacher, poet and leader.

We respectfully request that Karen Georgia be installed in this ministry among us,
according to the faith and order of the United Church of Christ.

Rev. Steven Gower

The local church as an expression of the United Church of Christ is where the Gospel and our commitments as a denomination are lived out daily. Together with our Associations, Conferences and National setting we remember that we are never alone. We are all connected and a part of the body of Christ.

Rev. Nayiri Karjian

Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson answered her call to ordained ministry at Orange Grove Missionary Baptist Church in Durham, NC on August 15, 1999.

As a theological scholar at Union Theological Seminary and later at Washington State University she explored multiple faith belongings and the intersecting spaces of God's presence in and among humanity in and outside of the church.

Through her writings invited us to experience *Drums in My Veins*, the 2020 published compilation of her poetry that focuses on the injustices facing people of African Descent and the fight and desire for racial justice globally.

In the local setting of the church, Rev. Thompson was the pastor of New Hope United Church of Christ in DeLand, FL. At the conference level she served in the Florida Conference as the Minister for Disaster Response and Recovery.



In her former roles in the National Setting as Associate General Minister, Minister for Racial Justice and Minister for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations she faithfully served across and with multiple faiths and denominations to bring the unfolding of God's beloved community among us.

Today we are charged with Installing her as the 10th General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ. She is the very first woman to serve in this role, breaking decades long tradition, shattering glass ceilings, forging paths for many other women and girls to follow, all while standing in the strength of the women who have gone before her.

Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson, servant of God,
we invite you to come forward to accept the call to this office.

Ms. Julia Gaughan

Rev. Dr. Thompson, seeing that you are called to this ministry by the grace of God, are you willing to enter this covenant with the members of the United Church of Christ, its national setting, Conferences, Associations and Local Churches?

Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson

I am willing by the grace of God.

Rev. Steven Gower

You have been called to serve the church faithfully as teacher, preacher, and prophet administering the duties of the office of General Minister and President. Will you do this?

Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson

I promise to serve the church faithfully, preaching and teaching the word of God, and fulfilling all the responsibilities of this office, according to the grace given by God and the faith and order of the United Church of Christ.

Ms. Julia Gaughan

Members of the United Church of Christ, would you please join together and affirm our covenant with Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson.



United Church of Christ members

We receive Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson as General Minister and President, promising to labor with her and support her in our common ministry of the Gospel. We covenant with Rev. Dr. Thompson as a sign of our mutual ministry in Christ's name.

Our Covenantal Promises (UCC members in Bold)

Rev. David Long Higgins Will we proclaim together the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

Yes, with God's help.

Rev. Nayiri Karjian Will we seek together the Spirit's call in the signs of the times of our challenging world?

Yes, with God's help.

Rev. Steven Gower Will we rejoice in the Creator's generosity as we work together to mend creation?

Yes, with God's help.

Rev. David Long Higgins Will we worship together, sharing in the waters of baptism and the bread and cup of Jesus?

Yes, with God's help.

Ms. Julia Gaughan Will we walk together in God's ways, exploring new ways to live out our values of extravagant welcome; continuing testament; bold public witness?

Yes, with God's help.



Thank You

The Thompson Family

UCC GMP Search Committee

United Church of Christ Board

Council of Conference Ministers

The National Staff

Lakewood Congregational Church

St. Peter's Episcopal Church

GMP Installation Planning Committee

Rev. Merlyn Hyde-Riley

Our Ecumenical Partners

All participants of the Installation Service

Karen King Caterers

Lakewood Garden Center

Mr. C. Anthony Bryant, all musicians and vocalists

GMP's Stole - Rev. Katrina Clinton & Jo-Ellen Fisher

All persons present and online

All the members and friends of the United Church of Christ in all its settings



new beginnings

by Karen Georgia A. Thompson

on this day
this new day
is the promise of new beginnings
yesterday is of past
yesterday is long gone
yesterday was
today is before.

the stories live on, those stories
of broken hearts
of wounded lives
of false hopes
of unrealized dreams
stories that will be a part
of you and of me.

today brings promise
fresh new dreams
open roads
mended wings
today is possibilities
new beginnings
dreams of hope, promise and future.

6 July 2015

18:28

Seattle, WA

KGAT



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"Behold, I am making all things new!" From *Stating Our Faith in Urgent Times*, selection by Mary Luti, inspired by Revelation 21:5