

2020 GC/JC Lay Delegate Candidates

Essay Questions

Question 1: Please list your service/involvement in your local church and/or the North Texas Conference, including leadership positions held.

Question 2: Share briefly why you want to serve as a delegate to GC/JC and what difference you believe you can make as a part of the delegation.

Question 3: Please list previous experience on GC/JC delegation and why you feel your previous experience has prepared you to serve as a delegate if elected.

Question 4: What leadership experiences have you had in the church or community that will help you do the work of the delegation?

Question 5: What do you believe are the most important issues facing General and Jurisdictional Conferences of 2020?

Question 6: What do you believe God is calling The UMC to do in the near future to more effectively live out its mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world?

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Answer 1: Currently Lay Leader, former Finance Chair, former member of Outreach, all in the local church. At-large member of Annual Conference the last two years.

Answer 2: This is a pivotal time in the United Methodist Church. There are important decisions to be made at the 2020 General Conference that will determine how we continue to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the love of Christ in the world and what that will look like. There is a place at the table for all of God's children and I'd like to see us make that room.

Answer 3: I have had no experience on a delegation. However, I've attended General Conferences 2012, 2016, and 2019.

Answer 4: As a member of Faith in Texas, I was instrumental in helping St. Stephen become a member in that faith-based advocacy group. I have learned to listen and to prayerfully consider issues that impact the lives of people in the community and the world.

Answer 5: The most important issue is how we show the love of God in the world. What does it really mean to be a disciple of Christ? How do we communicate and come to a consensus on issues that may divide us? How do we love our enemies and not demonize them? How do we sit together, commune together, and love those who are not like us?

Answer 6: God is calling us to draw the circle wider, until it includes everyone in full communion. Although different parts, we are all of one body. God is calling us to serve and not divide.

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Answer 1: I am currently an approved candidate in the ordination process and I have been a lay delegate in the North Texas Conference for the past two years. I have also helped to start a new summer day-camp at FUMC Dallas called Urban Camp where I have been director for the past two years and will be returning again this summer. When I was in high school I helped to pioneer the Custer Road UMC's youth intern program which helped to give high-schoolers a better look at what it may look like to have a career in ministry.

Answer 2: I feel that it is a part of my calling to see how God moves throughout the entire world and to be a voice for the young Christians that feel that their voices aren't being heard because of our age. God has called people from all walks of life and from all ages to be a voice for those around them and I want to be a voice for young United Methodists. I believe that I can make a difference at General Conference because I believe that if we are going to stay true to John Wesley's ideals about social justice that we must be active participants in human rights activism as well as environmentalism. God calls us to love others as we love ourselves and we have come a long way but it is our duty to continue to fight for our brothers and sisters in Christ who feel devalued. I also believe that if we are going to be good stewards of the Earth then we must take the first step towards fighting climate change out of respect for the planet that God has given us.

Answer 3: I do not have previous experience from GC or JC.

Answer 4: I have been a lay delegate for the North Texas Annual conference for the past two years and have spent intentional time understanding the UMC's process for approving, passing and denying legislation. With my time at Southwestern University I have started a student lead worship service and a student lead Bible study as well as becoming the president of Methodist Student Movement. After spending two years as a camp director I have honed my skills as a leader so that I can speak clearly and concisely to large groups and relate to others on a personal level. These skills will carry over well to general conference because I can make points and arguments clearly and quickly so that there is less confusion and less time spent on each subject. I am also adept at relating to others which can allow me to understand another person's perspective and work with someone well even if we do not agree on something.

Answer 5: I believe that the UMC is still struggling with accepting and moving forward from the special general conference from this past year and there will be continued conversations around the subject. My hope is that we will be smart about using our time and to not get tunnel vision on one issue so that we can make the most of our time at General and Jurisdictional conference.

Answer 6: God is calling us to be able to love, accept and understand our brothers and sisters in Christ even when we do not agree with each other. If we are to be the body of Christ then we must accept the hands and the feet of Christ just as much as we would accept the eyes and ears. What makes the Church beautiful is the individuals that make up the collective. God does not want to see us divided and wants us to live among each other with respect and admiration for one another. If there are parts of the body that are hurting we are not supposed to amputate the limb but instead rehabilitate and heal the body so that we can be whole once again. Only then, will we realize our fullest potential and be able to making real, lasting, transformative change in the world.

Full Name: Kelly Carpenter
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District: Metro



Answer 1: Union Coffee Advisory Board

Union Coffee Candidacy Team leader

Board Member for each North Texas Collegiate Ministry North Texas Conference Board of Laity North Texas Conference Board of Ordained Ministry; Vocational Discernment Chairperson North Texas Conference Council on Youth Ministry Texas Youth Academy; various Director roles Metro District Committee on Ministry (2015-2018) South Central Jurisdiction Youth Coordinator (2012-2016) South Central Jurisdiction Mission Council (2012-2016) Delegate to 2014 Global Young People's Convocation and Legislative Assembly

Answer 2: I believe that my nearly eight years on Conference staff, ten years on local church and collegiate ministry staffs and life-time membership in the UMC across four annual conferences gives me a diverse experience and understanding of the broad spectrum composing the United Methodist Church. I was shocked to appear on the screen for election in 2014 and it has been one of the most amazing, difficult and expansive learning experiences of my life. I have discerned to be considered for the 2020 delegation for a number of reasons. Primarily, I believe there is a way for all people to be fully engaged, incorporated and celebrated in an expression of United Methodism and I believe I can make a difference in bringing that vision to reality. My most significant experiences of the delegation were in difficult conversations with those I most respect and simultaneously disagree with. I believe my experience from the previous 5 years is valuable particularly to support what I hope to be a large group of young people elected to serve on this year's delegation.

Answer 3: I was wholly unprepared for my election in 2014 as the 3rd elect lay delegate to the General Conference which thus put me on the floor at the 2016 General and Jurisdictional Conferences and 2019 Special Session. The two years of preparation with the delegation equipped me to arrive in Portland ready to engage. I was elected as secretary for the Administrative Committee on Credentials, an experience which gave me additional perspective on the global nature of the church and the vastly different cultural, economic and legal circumstances represented across United Methodism. Having the opportunity to serve another three years in preparation for the 2019 Special Session kept me very intentionally engaged in the full body of work and conversation around A Way Forward for our denomination, which I believe helps me to serve as a delegate in 2020 as we are very quickly moving forward, a great deal of work is already under way and the time to ramp up, take action, and engage is significantly shorter in this season than before.

Answer 4: I believe one of the most significant experiences that I have had most recently that will help me to do the work of the delegation is my training and experience as a Co-Active Leadership Coach. Identifying and honing the skills of having a calm presence, deep listening, asking powerful questions, raising alternative perspectives, expanding the possibilities and action planning equips me to engage in and navigate the challenging conversations that are ahead of us this year. My hope for a diverse Wesleyan presence is confirmed through experiencing the calling and leadership of all ages across all spectrums of UM belief, especially in hearing the call stories, preaching and dreams for the church of our inquiring through ordinand candidates. I believe how we do this work is vital to what we ultimately accomplish and my experience designing and facilitating trainings, conversations, evaluative processes and so forth could be helpful to navigating the way our delegation prepares for 2020.

Answer 5: I believe the most important issues facing the United Methodist Church and thus this session of General Conference are around how to truly be in ministry with ALL people and especially new people in new ways for the transformation of the world, for our congregations and for fruitful professional ministry lay and or-

dained; how to move forward as a people who transform the world while acknowledging our differences, celebrating our connection and giving space to minister each in their own context; and how to be a truly Global church that continues to be transformational in diverse circumstances.

Answer 6: I believe God is calling each person in the UMC to live, act and be bold in their entire journey of faith and especially in this season. I believe members of the UMC have a specific call and opportunity in this time to engage in truly deep and difficult Christian conferencing, to center the marginalized voices and to follow the unexpected leaders.

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District: Metro



Answer 1: I grew up here in North Texas at FUMC McKinney and I am now an active member of my local church, Highland Park United Methodist Church, serving in my Sunday School class (The Knot), the children's ministry, and involved in my UMW circle. I have volunteered with children's ministry at HPUMC and Munger since 2011, including a brief stint on staff during a staff turnover. I am raising my four boys (ages 6, 6, 4, and 2) in the church.

Answer 2: I believe fervently in "Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors." and love the United Methodist Church and what it stands for. I believe that to truly be the church, we need diversity of opinions and lives and for that reason, I am willing to serve the delegation. My demographic of young women is far underrepresented (probably due to the logistical and financial constraints of being away from kiddos for the duration of the conference) but with the support of my small group and my family, my family is working to budget for this because we believe strongly that our generation has a voice worth hearing.

Answer 3: I do not have any previous experience but look forward to learning from those who have been before.

Answer 4: I have my PhD in public policy and am high qualified to quickly parse information and see unintended consequences of policy. While my dissertation and work experience are all in nonprofit work, I believe it will transition easily into the work of delegation.

Answer 5: Following the divisiveness of the 2019 special session, I believe the church needs kind words and kind actions. We need people who can stand in love and support the ministries of the church. We are doing amazing things all over the world. We are changing hearts and changing lives. This good work needs to continue. The church needs to continue.

Answer 6: I believe fervently in the words of Jesus Christ in Matthew 22:36-40. "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: "'Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'" This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Full Name: Timothy (Tim) Crouch
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Church: Denton First UMC
District: North Central



Answer 1: First UMC Denton

- Administrative Board
- 3 Building Committees
- Taught Methodism 101 – Polity
- Chair of Communications
- Taught Confirmation Class
- Taught multiple Adult Sunday School Classes
- North Texas Conference
- Episcopacy Committee
- Core Leadership Team
- Jurisdictional Episcopacy Committee
- Chaired 2016 North Texas Conference Delegation
- Worked closely with the Lay Servant Ministries and the Conference Lay Leader in planning presentations following the 2016 General Conference and in advance of the 2019 Special Session.
- Previously served on Church and Society
- Previously served on Communications
- Previously served as Chair Higher Education and Campus Ministry
- Former Board Chair Denton Wesley Foundation

Answer 2: We are at a critical juncture for our church. My experience and relationships throughout the denomination have enabled me to work closely with other delegations and leaders in our church. How we navigate these upcoming days and the 2020 General Conference will determine what the church is to become.

We also will get a new bishop in 2020. As a member of the Jurisdictional Episcopacy Committee, I will be a part of the appointment process of our new bishop. I want to be sure that we receive a bishop that will effectively lead the North Texas Conference in the challenging days that are ahead.

Answer 3: General Conference Delegate – 2000, 2004, 2012, 2016, 2019 (Led Delegation 2016, 2019)
 Jurisdictional Conference Delegate – 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012, 2016
 Independent Commissions Committee 2000, 2004
 Conferences Committee 2012, 2016

I have developed close working relationships with bishops and delegates from across the denomination both in the U.S. and around the world. The ability to know who the players are and how to work with them is an important part of being effective at General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference. It is equally important to understand how things get done at General Conference.

After the Special Session, I have continued to be in dialogue on developing plans for how the denomination is to move forward in a way that will allow both sides to be faithful witnesses. My dream is that the church will find ways to remain connected so that if there is division that the door will remain open for reunification at some point in time. It took 95 years after the split in 1844 but in 1939 the church did reunite.

Answer 4: Chair of the 2016 & 2019 North Texas Conference Delegation UMCOM Board of Directors
 - Chair of Personnel Committee for UMCOM
 - Member of UMCOM Executive Committee
 Jurisdictional Episcopacy Committee
 Mainstream UMC – Board of Directors
 - Member of Executive Committee
 One Church Plan Coalition Member

Uniting Methodists Legislative Strategy Team Former Vice Chair – North Texas Public Broadcasting Immediate Past Chair – Serve Denton, Inc.
Served on 8 City of Denton or Denton ISD Bond Committees (Chaired 4 Bond Committees) Immediate Past Chair Denton Parks Foundation Life Board Member United Way Denton County Former Board Member Denton Chamber of Commerce

I would like to think that I am someone that gets things done. Leadership is one of those things that answers the question of how you get from point A to point B. Leadership is not always a matter of follow me, but sometimes is how you help to facilitate the process of decision making. Our delegation has historically been very good at working together, not always agreeing, but working together to help each delegate better understand the issues at hand and to make informed decisions when it is time to vote. Our mantra has always been that we will be the best prepared delegation in Methodism and we will again in 2020.

Answer 5: The results of the 2019 Special Session were disappointing to many of us. The vote was a rejection of the unity of our church. It was my opinion that the One Church Plan was the best option for maintaining that unity. The results of the vote were very painful to many in our denomination. However, I also believe that we had to go through that pain in order to get to the other side of what the future will look like. It was our Good Friday moment and you can't get to Easter without going through Good Friday. As a result, the most important issue facing the 2020 General Conference will be how we determine what the church will look like going forward. We have, unfortunately, reached a breaking point and the structure of our church will be changing but it can change for the better if we prepare for and handle the 2020 General Conference correctly.

Jurisdictionally, the most important issue will be the appointment of a new bishop to North Texas. There will be key questions about the election of new bishops that can serve in the changing structure of the church.

Answer 6: The most exciting thing that I have seen following the special session is the passion that has emerged for the church on both sides. In 2020, the structure of our church will change. I believe that the role of the general board and agencies will be greatly reduced if not eliminated and I think that will be a good thing. The passion of the laity for this new thing that will emerge out of the 2020 General Conference will replace the institutional church that has left us rule bound and passionless. We, the laity of the church, are the engines of our local churches. The passion of the laity for a church that they are excited about and that they want to share with others will enable us to live out the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ and transforming the world. Sometimes we see transformation of the world as something big and grandiose. But I believe that transformation of the world is one person at a time. If we have transformed one person's life, we have transformed the world.

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District: North Central



Answer 1: I grew up in the United Methodist Church being actively involved in my Youth program. Through my Youth Program I helped start the praise and worship band for youth Sunday evening worship. I also became a Youth leader in the church and became an at-large delegate for my church at annual conference in 2014. During my time in my Undergraduate career I served at churches back in North Texas during the summer. I served at Custer Road United Methodist Church as a youth summer program staff. The next summer I served as a SIM (Summer in Ministry) Intern at Union Coffee. The summer after I served at First United Methodist Church Rockwall as the youth program and media arts/worship intern. Before my my final summer of my undergrad career I came before my SPRC and the DCOM and became a certified candidate for ordained ministry. Finally, last summer I served as a youth summer program staff at my home church of Grace Avenue UMC.

Answer 2: After taking a United Methodist Polity class at Boston University School of Theology, where I am currently pursuing my MDiv., and going with that class to the special called session of the General Conference this year, I want to serve as a delegate to help form the future of the Church that I am coming into to serve. At the 2019 conference we saw a lot of pain, and a Church that was divided on how we should move forward. The decision that was made does not forward the mission of the Church and GC 2020 allows for a new delegation to come together a truly figure out the best way forward from the Church. I believe that my young adult presence will show that I care about the future of my Church because I am the future of the Church. We need more young voices to speak up because we are the future of the Church. Also, ever since coming to Boston University, I have met people from all across the United States and in different conferences. My connections allow me to help my fellow delegates learn about what other jurisdictions and conferences are planning to do next. This would allow us to work in collaboration rather than acting on our own.

Answer 3: I have not served as a GC/JC delegate before.

Answer 4: After serving since 2014 as an at-large delegate for my church in the annual conference I understand how delegation works. I got a even better understanding of the work of the delegation through my attendance at the special called 2019 GC. At the 2019 GC I sat with the North Texas Delegation and observers and learned about the legislation that was coming before the floor each day and with the preparation from my United Methodist polity class I learned how to do the work of the delegation without being a part of it. I understand that being a part of the delegation is a lot of work, but currently being in seminary I know how to be flexible and am able to multi-task with many different projects.

Answer 5: I believe that the most important issues facing GC/JC 2020 are Human sexuality, and the future of the United Methodist Church as it stands. The 2019 GC showed an out pour of emotions from United Methodists across the world on our decision about human sexuality and how we have continued to exclude those in the LGBTQIA+ community. The 2020 GC is time for us to come together as a new delegation to follow the mission of the Church to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. GC 2019 did not accomplish this mission as we continued to exclude people and make the United Methodist Church a church where only certain people can worship and practice their faith. Therefore, the issues that were presented at the 2019 GC are still important issues facing GC 2020.

Answer 6: I believe that God is calling us to remember the truth of the Gospel, which is to love. It is only when we understand this Gospel of love that will we be able to truly live into the United Methodist Church's mission. It is time for us to remember we are called to love and to include everyone to truly make disciples for the transformation of the world. If we fail to love then we fail God's calling on our hearts.

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District: North Central



Answer 1: I am a Lay member, having moved my membership from my long-time home church in the Northwest Texas Conference to FUMC Sachse.

I have served in numerous local church positions, including Children's Council Chair, Chair of Church and Society, SPRC and Nominations.

I have been heavily involved in church work at all levels. I chaired the Deploy Team (part of the NWTX D.I.N.E. structure) which was the advocacy arm of the Conference. As such, I was the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, Chair of the CCORR, Chair of CCSRW and have served on the Nominations Committee. I have been a UMCOR E.R.T. for many years. Following the West explosion and Granbury tornado, I oversaw the tornado response for over two months while the CTC Disaster Response Coordinator recovered from neck surgery.

I currently serve on the Board of Directors for The General Commission on Religion and Race for my second quadrennium. I am part of the Council of Bishops Ecumenical team to two of the ecumenical partners the UMC is part of: Christian Churches Together (where I have represented the UMC in the Hispanic/Latino gatherings) and Churches Uniting in Christ, where I serve as the Chair of the Racial And Social Justice Task Force (CUIC is a ecumenical group the UMC/MEC has been part of since 1962) which is made of of representatives from the AME, AMEZ, CME, UCC, Disciples of Christ, PCUSA, Moravian Church, Episcopal Church, ICCB, UMC and the ELCA). This group represents approximately 20 million congregants in the US in fighting racism and the reconciliation of ministries between the communions. It is one of the areas in which bilateral, multilateral and full communion agreements are negotiated. Both of these groups are part of the Council of Bishops Office of Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationships. I am one of approximately 100 world-wide members certified by the Council of Bishops to act as the trained ecumenical and interreligious representatives on behalf of the denomination.

I also serve as one of 10 jurisdictional members of the Disability Ministry Committee of The UMC.

I have served on the Circle of Protection, Interfaith Working Group on Foreign Aid, Bread For The World and Church World Service Lobbying teams to the US Senate and House.

I am serving on the Board of Trustees of Texas College, a Historically Black College/University located in Tyler, Texas and founded by the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church in 1892.

I have served as a Fair Process Advocate on behalf of GCORR and have an excellent understanding of the Book of Discipline.

Answer 2: For many years, I had planned to seek election to be a member of my General Conference delegation. Those hopes were sidelined while my wife attended Perkins School of Theology and sought the route to ordination. Regardless of my delay in seeking election, I continued to represent the denomination at many levels. That experience has made me well-versed in polity issues, processes, as well as a good working knowledge of our Discipline. I have invested much time in gathering this experience and The United Methodist Church has invested many resource in providing me that experience. It is time to put all of that to work.

Answer 3: Although I have never been a delegate to General or Jurisdictional Conference, I have been a monitor. Additionally, I have served for two quadrennium on the GCORR Legislative committee and am very aware of the time, energy, and focus needed to fill a role as a delegate. Knowing the process of legislation, monitoring (in an official capacity) the work of the General Administration Committee at GC2012 (the structure committee), and being part of a General Commission/Agency in its response to legislation has provided a unique experience that has prepared me to be an valuable part of the NTC delegation.

Answer 4: I have been on a track of church leadership development for many years. Starting at the local church level, I have been honored to serve also at the District, Conference, Jurisdictional, and Denominational levels. Being at these tables have taught me to be both a fervent advocate and a humble servant. Whereas many define a delegate differently than a representative, having been a representative these many years has instilled in me the ability to set my personal agenda aside for the greater good of the Church.

Answer 5: Recovery from the harm done by allowing our denomination to be focused on issues of human sexuality at the expense of many of our other ministries. That is not to say that human sexuality issues are not important, but these other ministries of our denomination have suffered as a result of a decrease in World Service Funds that are, in my opinion, a direct result of the stagnation of The UMC. General Agencies were told to expect a budget at an approximate 72% rate of those funds, but after GC2019, that percentage may be a wildly high estimate. A refocus of energies to vital ministries that have traditionally defined our Wesleyan heritage is a must.

Answer 6: I have worked for unity within the Body of Christ in my role as an ecumenical representative for the COB. It is that experience and perspective that I feel the denomination should embrace. Our singular, binary discussions around "unity" have served more to be divisive than cohesive. As we look to GC2020 to include votes on full communion with The Episcopal Church, we look toward potential calls to reinstitute funding for groups such as the Disability Ministries Committee, the HIV/AIDS Committee, the Older Adult Ministries Committee and other committees housed by GBGM that lost funding by consent calendar vote, unity takes on a different importance and definition than ever before. God's calling, in my opinion, is a calling to unity that is not defined by one issue, but by a return to what it truly means to be United Methodist.

Full Name: Cynthia R. Harry
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District: Metro



Answer 1: Certified Lay Servant, 2017- Present; Metro District At Large Lay Delegate to North Texas Annual Conference, 2013, 2015 – 2019; North Texas Conference (NTC) United Methodist Women (UMW) Committee on Nominations (CON), Chair, 2019- Present; NTC UMW CON, Member, 2017- 2018; Hamilton Park UMC (HPUMC) Age Level Coordinator, 2005-2009; HPUMC Church Council, 2005-2009, 2011-2016; HPUMC UMW, President, 2011-2016; HPUMC UMW- Vice-President, 2008-2010; HPUMC UMW, Secretary, 2003-2007; HPUMC UMW, Spiritual Growth Coordinator, 2017- Present; HPUMC Mature Adults Ministry, 2014- Present; HPUMC Food Pantry 2013- Present; HPUMC Vacation Bible School, Registration Chair, 2002, 2003; Methodist Dallas Medical Center Auxiliary Board, HPUMC Representative 2013-Present.

Answer 2: To whom much is given, much is required. I feel that I am being called to serve as a delegate beyond the North Texas Conference. I will be a new delegate and I will bring a fresh new diverse perspective to the business that will be transpiring during the South Central Jurisdictional Conference and/or the General Conference.

Answer 3: I have not served as a delegate to either the General Conference or the Jurisdictional Conference.

Answer 4: The church positions that I have held as listed: Certified Lay Servant, 2017- Present; Metro District At Large Lay Delegate to North Texas Annual Conference, 2013, 2015 – 2019; North Texas Conference (NTC) United Methodist Women (UMW) Committee on Nominations (CON), Chair, 2019- Present; NTC UMW CON, Member, 2017- 2018; Hamilton Park UMC (HPUMC) Age Level Coordinator, 2005-2009; HPUMC Church Council, 2005-2009, 2011-2016; HPUMC UMW, President, 2011-2016; HPUMC UMW- Vice-President, 2008-2010; HPUMC UMW, Secretary, 2003-2007; HPUMC UMW, Spiritual Growth Coordinator, 2017- Present; HPUMC Mature Adults Ministry, 2014- Present; HPUMC Food Pantry 2013- Present; HPUMC Vacation Bible School, Registration Chair, 2002, 2003; Methodist Dallas Medical Center Auxiliary Board, HPUMC Representative 2013-Present.

I worked for 27+ years as a Mechanical Engineer where I was the project lead on numerous multimillion dollar projects and I also served as the lead on Engineering week one year. I am a life member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated with 40+ years of membership. I have served as Sergeant at arms, chair of various committees. I have attended numerous Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated regional conferences, international conferences and leadership seminars. As a member of North Texas Conference United Methodist Women, I have attended two Leadership Development Seminars. I received 2019 Garland NAACP Award for being a Lay Servant. I have served as a mentor to fifth and sixth grade girls at Hamilton Park Pacesetters Elementary School since 2016. I am also a member of Church Women United.

Answer 5: I believe the issues are addressing LGBTQ community, addressing the changing demographics of the church, addressing the economic and numeric viability of the church and reaching the Millennial Generation.

Answer 6: I believe God is calling the UMC to be a more diverse, more inclusive, more sensitive and non judgmental.

Full Name: Dwight Harry
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Gender: Male
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District: Metro



Answer 1: Dwight joined Hamilton Park United Methodist Church (HPUMC) in July 1982. He has served in various ministries including: Special Days, Eiland Collins Foundation, United Methodist Men, Trustee, I.B. Foote Crusaders, and Lay Leadership Committee. Dwight has served as President of the United Methodist Men, Chairman of Eiland Collins Foundation, Chairman of the Hamilton Park UMC Board of Trustees, Chairman of the HPUMC Church Council and is a member of the North Texas Conference Board of Trustees. Dwight is a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. and is a Certified Lay Minister assigned to Hamilton Park United Methodist Church since 2016.

Answer 2: I would like the opportunity to continue to serve my Church, Conference and God. I am committed to the time and preparation necessary to be a fruitful and productive delegate. I can help make the experience and purpose of the GC/JC Conference real and relevant to the constituents in my Conference/District/Church.

Answer 3: I do not have any previous experience. I am a fourth generation United Methodist. My great grandfather, Richard Harry, help start five United Methodist Churches in the Louisiana Conference. I have always been familiar and interested in the reports our congregation bought back from the GC/JC.

Answer 4: As a Certified Lay Minister Appointed to HPUMC, I have prepared and and conducted entire worship services. As Chair of the Eiland Collins Foundation, I ensured disadvantaged youth were able to travel to Science and Math expositions through donations of more than \$30K. As President of the United Methodist Men, we ensured our Elderly and Youth in the community were recognized and felt secure. As Chairman of HPUMC Church Council, I helped chart a course of paying full apportionment and implemented repeatable processes for administration and philanthropy. As Chairman of the HPUMC Board of Trustees, I formalized our facilities request process and implemented a lease program for our in-house child care program. As a member of the North Texas Conference Board of Trustees I attended and voted in all meetings.

In the community, I served two years on the Garland Parks and Recreation Board and Tree Arbor Board. I attended all meetings and voted. As a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. I have held the offices of Finance Chair and Chaplin. I mentor Boys in Christian Manhood as a part of this organization.

Answer 5: The most important issues are consistently getting the unadulterated message of the Gospel out into the World and living that message. When others see we live what we preach, they will be drawn to the United Methodist Church by the Holy Spirit. They will want to know Jesus Christ.

Answer 6: God is calling us to live our creed right now, today. People want to see a sermon. It is good to hear a sermon, but if they can see it they may choose to live it as well.

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Gender: Female
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District: North Central



Answer 1: As a 33-year member of my church, I've had the opportunity to serve my local church and the Conference in many various facets:

Active participation in the music program, in youth, chancel, and praise choirs and in handbell ensembles, as well as having played in the orchestra.

Women's Service Group (it has expanded into various other mission-based projects) and Faith and Flowers/-women's special events committees VBS music leadership Teaching various levels of Sunday schools (3-year-olds, Confirmation, youth, visiting speaker at adult classes) and leading and participating in book groups Worship Committee Member (and served as chair) Lay Preaching team – leading worship at Legacy Senior Communities

NTC: Annual Conference: At-large and Church Lay Representative; Performed in music ensembles for AC Worship services; Committee: Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns (would love to serve on another committee, too!)

Answer 2: Having participated for years as an Annual Conference delegate, I have seen the potential which the church has to bring transformation to the world. Even though we do need to keep order in our meetings, the Spirit won't be hindered by those limitations. As a teacher, I understand the importance of organization and preparation before entering a meeting; as a debate coach, I understand the necessity of making sure your message is stated as clearly and succinctly as possible; as a Christian, I understand that God's power is what will enact God's justice, and my calling is to love my neighbor.

Answer 3: My lack of previous experience may be a benefit – I would be serving as a delegate who attends the conference with new eyes and ears, without prior bias. With that said, I have highest regard for those who have experience, and would seek out their stories, experiences, and advice before attending as a delegate, myself.

Answer 4: A team is successful because every member brings their own perspective and experiences to make the group stronger; the skills which I've developed through my vocation and avocation prepare me well to be part of the delegation. In all elements of my life, Connection and Community with compassion are key. In my day job, I am a high school teacher and department chair, so I must effectively communicate and have great organizational skills, and my career skills are strongest in identifying and encouraging others' potential and supporting others in expressing their ideas most clearly. From my service to the church, God has revealed unforeseen potential (within others, within programs) to me in so many ways, and I've learned that I see the most growth in others when I just let God do what we try so hard to accomplish.

Answer 5: Fear of change; profundity of God's will for the Church versus our human understanding of working organizational systems; Refocusing on the work of the Methodist Church as a nurturing community and a servant community.

Answer 6: When we think we are trapped in a corner, God turns the perspective to help us see our situation from a new viewpoint. When our path is blocked with an obstacle, God reveals new paths never before realized. God calls us to readjust our focus on the mission of the church to see how we can value the perspective of every one of God's children.

Full Name: Shandon Klein
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District: Metro



Answer 1: I am currently the Assistant Director of Welcoming Ministries at First United Methodist Church Richardson. My responsibilities include the development and maintenance of the programs and processes used in assuring positive experiences, relationship development and engagement opportunities for both guests and members. I serve on the Modern Worship leadership team, aiding in strategic visioning, Sunday morning volunteer management, and congregational correspondence. I also co-led the research task force for the selection of a new church management database, oversaw its implementation and change management for both our staff and congregation, and currently lead a database maintenance team of staff super-users.

Answer 2: After over two years of discernment, I have determined a call to United Methodist polity. Having followed our last two Annual Conferences and our recent Special Session, I have fallen in love with the potential of our polity, although our denomination threatens to fracture under the weight of polarization. The global and connectional nature afforded by our polity has such potential to show the world how to respectfully hold differing perspectives in unity with one another. However, as our Special Session revealed, there is much work to be done to reunify our beloved denomination. I believe that my impact lies in my unique perspective not only as a young, black woman, but as a scientist who has embarked on a call to ordained ministry thanks to my introduction to the United Methodist Church. God has equipped me with the analytical ability instilled by my scientific background, the communicative skill of bridge building, and a lens of diversity that are all assets to our delegation.

Answer 3: Although I do not have any previous experience on the GC or JC delegation, my previous experience in scientific research, my current experience in seminary, and my church leadership has prepared me for such an important role. For over 15 years, I had been trained to thoroughly research both sides of scientific arguments, to scrutinize patterns and inconsistencies, and to building efficient procedures providing potential solutions to particular research questions or problems. My current seminary training has helped me to hone these skills even more with the lens of theology and discipleship. Over 1000 petitions will be presented to the delegates of General Conference over 2 weeks of deliberation. It is imperative that any delegate not only focuses on one or two specific petitions, but all of them. They must work together to determine whether each legislation brought forth helps to efficiently advance our mission to create disciples for the transformation of the world. They must tirelessly spend hours of research time, both before and during the conference to objectively come to sound decisions of which legislation should move forward for adoption into the Book of Discipline. This research does not only involve analyzing the particular words and nuances of the legislation. It involves objectively hearing both sides of each argument for legislation with open hearts and minds, regardless of the polarization: a notion that is integral in my current leadership position in Welcoming Ministries. Likewise, the same care must be taken at Jurisdictional Conference to research the backgrounds of each of the candidates for bishop as well as members of our general boards and agencies. Therefore, my years of training as a scientist, my current training in seminary, and my church leadership experience has prepared me for the honor of serving as a lay delegate for the North Texas Conference.

Answer 4: My role as Assistant Director of Welcoming Ministries at First United Methodist Church Richardson provides me with two lenses: one of our church's mission and one of our laity. Not only I am intimately involved in developing processes that allow the laity to engage in the life of the church and develop relationships with one another, but I am intimately involved with their spiritual growth on a personal level as well. I am able to see the impact first hand of policies or procedures that we have created for our laity. Therefore, I am keenly aware that while a particular policy may seem perfect "on paper", it takes a human aspect of evaluation to

determine a policy's true effectiveness on the life and discipleship of our laity. I believe this is directly applicable to the work of the delegation as we evaluate hundreds of petitions and interview many candidates for office. We must keep the mission of the United Methodist Church in mind, but also evaluate where we are in that mission by listening to all sides who are affected by such policies, adjusting our decisions accordingly for effectiveness.

Answer 5: I believe that there are three main issues that will continue to pervade General and Jurisdictional Conferences of 2020: Unity, Discipleship, and Evangelism. It is not secret that our United Methodist Church is deeply polarized, and we must determine a structure that will allow our global denomination to stay united as one body of Christ. The issue of unity bleeds into the issues of discipleship and evangelism as our polarization threatens to hurt our ability to spread a unified Gospel of Christ to all nations or grow others in Christ. Also, determining effective leaders that embody these issues will be paramount for the Jurisdictional Conference as we elect new bishops for the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

Answer 6: I believe that God is calling the UMC to truly listen to one another and be a beacon of light for the rest of the world. Our connectional denomination has the potential to show the world that a body with different parts, hearts, and ideologies can stand united for a common goal. I believe God is calling us to hold our polarized sides in tension and unity for the growth of our holy and catholic church.

Full Name: Jon Lannom
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Gender: Male
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Occupation: Law Enforcement
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Church: Forney UMC
District: North Central



Answer 1: At FUMC Forney I've served on the Trustee Committee for seven years and was the Trustee Chair for two years. I also served on the Nominations Committee for two years. Currently, I'm a member of our Healthy Church Initiative team.

I was the Scouting Coordinator for eight years overseeing all Boy Scout, Girl Scout, and American Heritage Girls activities. In addition, I served for four years as the BSA Chartered Organization Representative for our church's Boy Scout Troop and Cub Scout Pack. I am currently a UMM certified Scouting Ministry Specialist for the North Texas area.

I have been a member and lay delegate to the North Texas Conference for the past two years. I am also the North Texas Annual Conference Chapter Organizer for the Wesleyan Covenant Association.

Answer 2: So that I can represent the Spirit-filled and like-minded traditional United Methodists and orthodox Wesleyans within our Annual Conference. The 2020 General Conference will be a critical event for the United Methodist Church and I believe that I have been called to step forward and become involved as a delegate there.

If elected I will commit the necessary time to read and study the issues. I will attend all North Texas Annual Conference delegate meetings. And most importantly, I will continue to pray for God's guidance in my decision making and for the time-honored way we have attempted to discern His way while conferencing.

Answer 3: No previous GC or JC delegate experience.

Answer 4: As a member of various committees within my church, I have been able to listen to various points of view and represent them in a fair and equitable manner. As a delegate to our Annual Conference, I have been able to garner member input prior to conferencing and then provide feedback to our church when it concludes. I believe that I convey the overall beliefs and expectations of our church's membership and I consistently represent them during the Annual Conference.

As a Scout Leader and a Scouting Ministry Specialist, I have had the opportunity to solicit input from various factions and to implement strategies that worked in the best interest of all those involved. This had been at many levels of participation - from a large geographical area that includes multi-states and all the way down to the individual unit organization.

As a member of law enforcement, I have had the privilege to serve as a Peace Officer for over 20 years. I can assure you that "conflict resolution" is a major part of that job description and I have had decades of successful experience in implementing that skill set. Getting along with others in a peaceful and constructive manner, while obeying the various laws are key concepts that we continually strive to communicate and expect of those that we come into contact with on a daily basis.

I was also awarded the President's Lifetime Achievement Award by President George Bush in recognition for my extensive volunteer work in the Dallas community. I have thousands of hours of successful leadership in guiding fellow volunteers toward a common goal and to make a difference.

I believe that my experience in all of these various areas - church, scouting, law enforcement, and as a volunteer will help me do the work of the delegation.

Answer 5: The most important issue is that we somehow move past the current divisiveness and serious conflict that we are experiencing in the United Methodist Church so that we can focus our time and energy on the mission of the church which is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. The General Conference is the authoritative body and voice of the United Methodist Church and by the Constitution of the UMC, the General Conference is given the authority to discern, lead, and speak for the denomination. Our current polity respects the concerns and voices of all the church's people and I believe it is necessary that the church should respect the will of the General Conference for the good order of the church.

While the General Conference can hear and respect all the concerns of the church's people, it is impossible to adopt and implement every one of those varied positions. If we are in fact of two minds on critical issues and have irreconcilable differences, then the best way forward is to acknowledge those and walk apart rather than pretending we are unified when we are so evidently not.

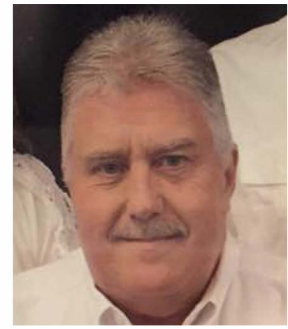
If that does happen then The General Conference needs to work on a resolution that honors the consciences and convictions of all people involved in this debate no matter what their position is. This resolution should be fair and equitable and allow for local congregations to retain control over all their property and assets so good ministry is not disrupted and people are respected.

Another issue is the continued decline in church attendance. It needs to be addressed and strategies to increase membership growth need to be discussed. The Healthy Church Initiative that is being utilized in our annual conference is a good program and we need to explore any other options or strategies that might be available.

In closing let me say that I have a lifelong love for Methodism and Wesleyan theology – I was a Methodist before there even was a UMC. I affirm the United Methodist Church's long-held sexual ethics, its teachings on marriage, its ordination standards, and its strong conviction that ALL people are of sacred worth. I am a member of the Wesleyan Covenant Association, an organization that reflects the global diversity of the United Methodist Church and stands for Scriptural Christianity. A group that affirms the great creeds of the church - the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed. We long for all people to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and call on all United Methodists to winsomely promote and defend all the classical teachings of the Christian faith. I hope and pray that the General Conference is led by the Spirit of God, and I pray for the Holy Spirit to guide them in their work.

Answer 6: It is imperative we resolve the conflict that has undermined the health and viability of the United Methodist Church and has harmed the witness of the church universal. I think that God is also asking for all members of the UMC to hear and respect everyone's position even if they don't agree with it. I also believe that He is calling for us to respect the decisions and authority of the General Conference.

Full Name: Roger Leslie Little
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Church: Blue Ridge UMC
District: North Central



Answer 1: I was raised in and supported the United Methodist Church my whole life. While growing up in rural Iowa, I supported and attended the Thornburg, Keswick, and What Cheer United Methodist Church. My great grandparents, grandparents, parents and family all attended. Since Moving to the DFW area, I supported the Christ United Methodist Church Plano while attending other churches. Since moving to rural Blue Ridge Texas in 2013, I have been a member of First United Methodist Church. I played an important part in raising the money to build our new church. I serve on the Finance committee, and last year started up our Stewardship Committee as chair. I also serve on our safety committee. This month I was voted unanimously to be our Lay leader of our church. I am very humbled and honored to serve in this next chapter of my life.

Answer 2: I believe in the United Methodist Church. I have seen what the church means to me and the rural communities and how the people unite together to help each other, love each other, and share the good news of the Gospel. The rural churches need their voice to be heard as an important part of the North Texas Conference, General conference and the Global church. My passion is providing for our children as they become our future leaders in our communities and churches. The good Lord took me on an incredible journey from being born and raised on a family farm and farming myself, to North Texas with a 30 year career in the Food service Industry. I have worked together with local and National clients, Distributors, and operator partners to make a win-win situation for all parties. I know and believe I can help our delegation to follow the Lord's will for our church.

Answer 3: I am a delegate for the 1st time to the North Texas Conference in June. After a 30 year successful career in the Food service industry, the Lord has put upon my heart to retire 12/2018 at 60 years old and do more for his glory, his church and our community. In my food service career I started out as sales representative. Over the years the Lord opened doors for me in management, and ownership in several companies. During this time I served teams as small as 7 to regional teams exceeding 200 while managing a \$25 million budget. As Executive Vice President for a large National Sales Agency, we were challenged each and every day to work thru problems of our local, regional and National branded clients we represent, their distribution network, and core operators that purchased their products. With a servant's heart and tremendous understanding of all parties, their views, expectations, enabled us to create a win-win results for everyone. I have the desire, time, resources, and commitment to serve the needs and expectations of the General Conference.

Answer 4: In our church I have been on the finance committee for 3 years. Last year I was nominated as chair and started our first Stewardship committee. In addition I volunteered and started our children's bus ministry as the driver with now full buses on Wednesday nights. I also change our sign on highway 78 several times a month and am on our safety committee. Recently I have been voted unanimously to be our lay leader. I am humbled, honored, and excited to serve. In the past 6 months a few of our activities including painting all of the fire hydrants in the city of Blue Ridge, participated in the Harvest Festival and Christmas parade, re-painted our bus, participated in National night out, ran concession stand for parents night at BRHS football game, supported the Angel Tree program, started Tithe LY, to highlight a few.

Answer 5: Division is attacking our personal lives, families, communities and our church. As a church and its people, we need to follow God's will and his word in all matters. After several years of preparation and planning the Special Session of the General Conference was held in late February 2019 in St Louis. By a vote of 438-384 the conference passed the traditional plan, which retains church policy that the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teachings and strengthens bans against same sex unions and ordination of

self-avowed practicing gay clergy. I believe that after years of prayers, planning, and conversations the outcome from the Special conference vote was Gods will for his church. We now need to move forward with what unites us.

Answer 6: To follow the Lords will and his word. We need to stop focusing on social issues that divides us. We need to focus on the all the things we have in common as we are all sinners. We need to focus on loving each individual, compassion and desire to help those in need, missionary projects, local communities, teaching and preaching the gospel creating disciples of Christ, raising our children to know of Christs love, always respect others, and living to give. We need to unite on the key Christian elements that we all share and live up to our name United Methodist Church.

Full Name: Keri Lynn Lucas
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Church: Lovers Lane UMC
District: Metro



Answer 1: Member of Lovers Lane UMC (2015 - present) Small group leader for youth ministries (2016 - present) Leadership team for young adult ministries (2017 - present) Staff Member, Lovers Lane UMC (June 2015- present) NTC Center for Leadership Development Intern (2015) South Central Jurisdiction Delegate to Global Young People's Convocation in Johannesburg, South Africa (July 2018) Annual Conference Voting Member (2015, 2017 - present) Guide for CCYM attendees to Annual Conference (2017)

Answer 2: I love the United Methodist Church. I grew up attending a United Methodist Church every Sunday morning since I was born. I stood at the same altar for my baptism, confirmation, and high school graduation. When I moved to Dallas for college I got involved with a United Methodist Church. Through an internship with our North Texas Conference, I witnessed the strength of the connexionalism within the United Methodist Church. God has called me to be part of the United Methodist Church for all of my life. I hold a strong admiration for the United Methodist Church.

In 2018, I was honored to serve as a representative from the North Texas Conference to serve as a voting delegate to the Global Young People's Convocation (GYPC) in Johannesburg, South Africa. This experience deepened my love for the UMC. At GYPC, I got to see the global nature of the United Methodist Church on full display. GYPC stirred in me a passion for our legislative process and a better understanding of how it works. Because of this passion for the legislative process, I decided to attend the 2019 General Conference as an observer and worked closely with other young adults who were working with various delegations in our jurisdiction. (More information about GYPC can be found in the Book of Discipline paragraph 1210.) If selected for the North Texas Conference delegation, I will represent subgroups poorly represented at past Conferences. At General Conference 2016 and 2019, women made up only 36% of the global delegation (compared to the 57% women makeup of our worldwide United Methodist membership.) I want to see more women serve as delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences, and I believe that starts with me applying for our 2020 conferences.

Additionally, young adults (those under the age of 35) only made up only a small percentage of the global delegation. For me personally, it was heartbreaking to see over 200 youth and young adults who are passionate about the United Methodist Church at GYPC, only to then see this subgroup make up less than 10% of our delegation at General Conferences 2016 and 2019. Young adults are the inheritors of what the United Methodist Church legislates at General Conference and should make up a significant portion of the delegation. GYPC proved to me that there are both youth and young adults who are passionate about the United Methodist Church as well as our legislative process.

Because of this, it is important that young adults make up at least 20% of our global delegation and women should make up 50%. Our conferences should be encouraged to vote for women as well as passionate and strong young adults who care about the future of our denomination and are willing to engage in the process of General and Jurisdictional Conferences. I believe I can represent these groups as a delegate.

Answer 3: Though I have no experience with the GC/JC delegation, at GYPC, I worked closely with other youth, young adult, and adult voting delegates to prepare legislation that could possibly appear at the 2020 General Conference. I gained experience in the voting process, Robert's Rules of Order, speaking at the microphone during the legislative sessions, and the behind-the-scenes political process and lobbying. I also had the opportunity to engage with the global community of GYPC as well as our team from the South Central Jurisdiction. Though I recognize the General and Jurisdictional Conference are larger stages than GYPC, I believe my previous experience there has opened my eyes to the ways in which I may be able to use the gifts of administration and organizing, listening, compassion and leadership that God has given me.

As a staff member at Lovers Lane UMC, I have worked closely with members of our church who are part of the LGBTQ+ community, youth, young adults, conservatives, liberals, centrists, African refugees, and many others. Though LLUMC does not represent the entire United Methodist Church, my experience there has helped me believe in the possible unity that can be achieved with our beloved denomination.

Answer 4: I have spent the past four years working closely with youth and young adult ministries both at the local church, conference, and jurisdictional level as well as the adults who work with these age levels. I have helped plan camps, retreats, worship services, and other special events for these groups. Because of these experiences, I believe that I can speak to the experience and heart of what is perhaps the most important upcoming generation in our beloved denomination, the inheritors of the decisions that are made at General and Jurisdictional Conferences. In addition to my work with youth and young adult ministries, I have also served as a voting member to the North Texas Annual Conference two times.

I believe that I have an understanding of the various social contexts in which many of our NTC churches operate, from the small rural country church to larger metropolitan churches, and everything in between. Many of my projects in seminary have spent time looking closely at our North Texas churches. Our conference has a wide range of ministries and connections we engage in and it is vital that our delegates are aware of these and remember them when they are voting. The votes that are cast not only impact the local church a delegate may serve, but the entire North Texas Conference they represent. I believe it is also important that delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conference understand the global nature of the church we are part of. Though delegates represent The North Texas Conference, we are all part of a global connection that is the Body of Christ.

Answer 5: The General and Jurisdictional Conferences of 2020 could find themselves heading in many directions after the contentious General Conference of 2019. It is no secret that navigating “a way forward” will be part of the 2020 General Conference. This is a vital time for the United Methodist Church. The world is watching to see what might happen to our beloved denomination next -- schism or stay together? While we are still trying to find the ways the church might navigate the waters of LGBTQ+ inclusion, many others are seeking the church's attention on other issues.

At GYPC in 2018, we prepared legislation on the matters of child marriage, nationalism, sexism, migration, and prioritizing young people in the church. Many of these issues plague our global community of United Methodists and deserve legislation and social principles from our global and jurisdictional body. I believe these topics in addition to many others deserve the attention of the General and Jurisdictional Conferences, as does moving forward together after GC 2019.

Specifically for the Jurisdictional Conference of 2020, it is time that our annual conferences uplift a more diverse set of voices at the leadership table. Due to the fact that most of the general church boards and committees are primarily filled by General and Jurisdictional Conference delegates, we need to see a more diverse delegation. To put it simply, I hope to see more women, young people, and persons of color in leadership in our annual conferences following Jurisdictional Conference 2020.

Answer 6: I am passionate about the connexionalism of the United Methodist Church. Our ability to be in community with those across our annual conference, state, nation, and world better equips us for ministry in our local context. Personally, I have come to meet so many wonderful friends because of our connection through our denomination. In 2019 I will graduate from a United Methodist Seminary. I have benefitted from the hard work of United Methodist boards and agencies funded by our global body. I have been part of UMVIM and UMCOR groups on relief in mission.

General Conference 2019 left a lot of United Methodists hurt, sad, confused, and questioning. The world is watching closely to see what our denomination will do next. In this next season of ministry, it may be more important than ever we find ways to continue to be in community with one another seeking the things that we have in common rather than the things that tear us apart. Without our connection, the aforementioned boards, agencies, committees, seminaries and relief efforts will not thrive. Though the work of the General and Jurisdictional Conferences is vital to our survival, I hope that the delegates of General and Jurisdictional Conference 2020 will be able to find ways to be together that we might further empower the United Methodist Church to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Full Name: Lori Massey
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Church: Bonham First UMC
District: East



Answer 1: I have been active within my local church, Liturgist, Sunday School Teacher, Worship Leader, Filling the pulpit at Lannius UMC as a Certified Lay Minister, District Director of Lay Servant Ministries, serving actively on the LSM Conference Committee, and as an Associate District Lay Leader with the NTC Board of Laity. I have also taken part with leadership in the South Central Jurisdictional ACDLSM.

Answer 2: I am offering to serve as a person of faith and committed to the life of the church. I try to approach decisions with reason, compassion, and empathy. I live and serve in a rural area. I come from a family of diversity. I hope my experience of listening to various opinions, and discerning direction with a prayerful heart and mind, can be used in our church filled with diversity. In my years of work experience in health insurance, I have had to interpret and research many regulations and policies in Medicare and Medicaid. This gives me an understanding of the importance of how regulations and policies are written.

Answer 3: I volunteered at GC in Ft Worth with the UM Rural Fellowship. I witnessed the grueling schedule and work that occurred within a committee. The committee I reported on, was the committee on the Global Board of Higher Education. The issue of Local Pastors having the right to vote on certain issues at Annual Conference, was being formed and amended in this committee. I was extremely moved at the global experience of GC. I saw how much occurred between legislation, vibrant speakers, and inspiring worship. I knew the UM Church was where I belonged. I then delved into studying the history, the polity, and the theology we understand in the beliefs of the UM Church. This is when my desire to serve past the local church grew.

Answer 4: As District Director of Lay Servant Ministries, I have been tested. I have had to interpret Book of Discipline, to make decisions. My strength has been in pastoral care and prayer, not only in the local church, but also within my community. When you touch someone else's life in faith, there will be fruits that you may never even see. I have been active in the Conference Committee, and assisted with Conference level events. I have also assisted in the South Central Jurisdiction of Annual Conference Directors of Lay Servant Ministries. As a Lay Minister, I have assisted with leadership of rural small membership churches. I have also learned, to call on your resources, mentors, and others, because we are a part of something bigger than our self, and we are meant to be connectional.

Answer 5: How are we going to reach out in ministry with the NONE's, while we still nurture and care for the long time faithful. There will be issues to address from the 2019 GC, but we cannot let that distract us from what our mission in the world is. There will be infrastructure issues, of how new clergy of the next generation are called, educated, nurtured and cared for. How do we focus on our commonality of fulfilling the Great Commission. A new look at growing the church in clergy and laity is needed. Order, Structure, and Financing have to be addressed in order to accomplish this mission in the world.

Answer 6: NOW - Nurture, Outreach, and Witness. God has called the UMC many years in the past, and I believe, for many years to come, in Bringing the Love and Words of Christ in the world, to people and parts of the world that are often not seen or heard. We are to follow the example of Jesus, in meeting the needs of people where they are, especially those living on the fringes: in hunger, in poverty, in illness, in tragedy, and many other afflictions. The Methodist movement has made many changes to the world we know, bringing health care, education, hope, and love to many. There is still more for the Church to do, because those issues are never ending issues of humanity. Summarized: Mission and Social Justice in a Call to Action.

Full Name: Jenny Misslin
Clergy or Lay: Lay
Gender: Female
Ethnicity: Caucasian, European American
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Church: Highland Park UMC
District: Metro



Answer 1: I am currently on staff at Highland Park UMC as the Congregational Care Coordinator. I oversee our Domestic Violence Ministry and our Addiction Recovery Ministry. Prior to this role I was the GroupLife Coordinator and oversaw Sunday Morning Classes, Small Groups and UMW.

Service wise, I have worked with DFW Year of Unity to create Unity Groups, which are groups based around the concept of Racial Reconciliation. I also wrote the 6 week curriculum these groups utilize. I am a Spiritual Director and went through the Texas Conference of the UMC's certification program. I teach a lot of classes here at the church around Prayer, Presence, Conflict Resolution and The Enneagram.

Answer 2: I would like to serve as a delegate to GC/JC because I have hope for the future of Methodism. I believe I bring a calm presence and a sense of understanding and rationale and would be a good addition to the delegation.

Answer 3: I have no previous experience with GC/JC delegation, which is exactly why I think I'd be a good delegate. I would bring fresh perspective and a creative way of listening and problem solving.

Answer 4: I have led small groups, classes, studies and many many meetings. I believe my work with DFW Year of Unity around the topics of Racial Reconciliation helps me to be sensitive to different cultures and ethnicities and makes me more aware of my own prejudices. I think being a Spiritual Director helps me to calmly process and to deeply listen. My work with the enneagram helps me to understand that everyone views the world differently and to have space for different points of view.

Answer 5: I believe the church is facing a schism over LGBTQI+ inclusion and that we need to speak honestly and openly about what that might look like.

Answer 6: I believe we need to more honestly address inclusion of all people and the idea that we either need to all figure out a way to exist together with our differences or to move forward separately.

Full Name: Julie B. Noel
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Gender: Female
Ethnicity: Caucasian, European American
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Church: Highland Park UMC
District: Metro



Answer 1:

- Highland Park UMC: Member (1982-Present); Congregational Care Lay Minister (2016-Present); Fellowship Class Programs Committee: (2017-Present); Altar Guild (2013-Present); Church Council (2012); UMW (Chair, Nominations: 2015; Treasurer: 2012, 2015-2016; President: 2012; Communications: 2010-2014)
- NTC Board of Laity: Member (2019)
- NTC UMW: President (2019), Treasurer (2017-2018), Secretary (2016)
- Dallas Bethlehem Center Board of Directors: Vice Chair (2018-2019), Member (2017)
- Metro District UMW: Secretary (2013-2015)

Answer 2: Why me? Esther 4:14 (NRSV): "...Who knows? Perhaps you have come to [this position] for just such a time as this." I feel spirit-led to step forward and submit my name for consideration to serve as a member of the GC/JC delegation. I am deeply concerned about the future of the UMC moving forward. I would like to take a more active role in helping shape the future of a United Methodist Church that extends radical hospitality and the love of Christ Jesus – in spirit, heart, mind, and governing policy – to anyone at any time.

Answer 3: I have no previous experience serving on either the GC or JC delegation.

Answer 4: As a speech-language pathologist for over 25 years, I have extensive experience in serving in a variety of volunteer membership and leadership capacities on governing and management boards at local, regional, and national levels. I have served, on multiple occasions, alongside others with diverse and/or opposing opinions, on regional and national delegations charged with reaching consensus and making crucial policy and governance decisions as well as short-term and long-term strategic planning recommendations.

Answer 5: I believe in the sanctity of the United Methodist Church and its mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. To that point, I believe strongly that the most important issues facing General and Jurisdictional Conferences in 2020 are as follows: (1) reaffirm the commitment that the UMC will continue to be open and welcoming to all people – just as they are, right here, right now, and despite their human faults and shortcomings -- who genuinely and earnestly seek a meaningful, relational experience with the risen Lord Jesus Christ through worship, fellowship, and service; and (2) commit to determining a fair and just method of removing obstacles from the path of anyone seeking to enjoy such a relationship through association and membership in the UMC. Matthew 22:39 (NRSV): "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Answer 6: I believe God is calling the UMC to continue to be the hope and light of the world – inspired by the Lord Jesus Christ and through His grace -- for so many in darkness in our communities, in our workplaces, and around the world. The mission goes on, and the work continues. Micah 6:8 (NRSV): "He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God."

Full Name: Linda Parks
Clergy or Lay: Lay
Gender: Female
Ethnicity: Caucasian, European American
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Church: Floral Heights UMC
District: Northwest



Answer 1: Current service/involvement
North Texas Conference

- Board of Ordained Ministry 2016-present
Northwest District
- Superintendency Committee
Local Church – Floral Heights UMC, Wichita Falls
- Lay Leader
- Chancel Choir member
- Episcopacy Committee 2012-present
- At-large member to Annual Conference
- Adult Sunday School Teacher

Previous service/involvement
North Texas Conference

- Conference Lay Leader 2012-2016
- Conference Nominating Committee Chair 2012-2016
- Northwest District
- Northwest/Wichita Falls District Lay Leader 2000-2012
- Local Church – Floral Heights UMC, Wichita Falls
- Healthy Church Initiative Coordinator
- Served as a member or chair of most committees except Trustees
- Core Leadership Team 2010-2016
- Board of Laity Chair 2012-2016

Answer 2: I offer myself for consideration as a delegate and would consider it a privilege to be elected to serve and represent the North Texas Conference at the 2020 General/Jurisdictional Conferences. Why do I want to serve as a delegate? – simple answer – I love my God and my church and consider it a joy serving both.

I have strong organizational skills and prepare myself by reading, questioning, listening, discussing the issues, and attending the preparation meetings. Representing the North Texas Conference as a General/Jurisdictional Conference delegate would be an enormous honor and I believe I can be an asset to the delegation, conference and Methodism serving with passion, sincerity, enthusiasm, and experience while working to make Methodism better for making disciples for the transformation of the world.

Answer 3: 2012 – South Central Jurisdictional Conference Delegate
2016 – General and Jurisdictional Conference Delegate
2016 – Served on the General Conference Discipleship Legislative Committee
2019 – General Conference Delegate

Through active participation in pre-conference preparation meetings and attending the above listed conferences, I have been able to increase my understanding and knowledge concerning the workings and current issues facing the greater church. As the previous Conference Lay Leader and a member of the executive team of the Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders, relationships across the connection with lay delegates have been built and strengthened with each encounter. These relationships have been reinforced during conferences and have provided dialogue that spanned all spectrums of thought.

As a member of two South Central Jurisdictional Conference delegations, I was part of the group interviewing and electing new bishops for the jurisdiction. Through this process of studying the profiles and interviewing the candidates, skills necessary to elect visionary leaders for our jurisdiction were acquired.

My participation and involvement in the various aspects of the General and Jurisdictional Conferences and established working relations with other laity have prepared me to serve as a delegate.

Answer 4: Currently, as I member of the conference's Board of Ordained Ministry, I have watched many sermons, read theological responses to the sacraments, and participated in countless interviews. Being able to engage collaboratively in a small group and again in the large group is essential for the board's work to be completed.

Previously, serving as the Chair of the Administrative Board and Council on Ministries required me to plan agendas, facilitate discussions and lead the decision-making process for these groups. In the role of the District Lay Leader, I provided district training for local Lay Leaders and Lay Members to Annual Conference. The preparation required, in order to provide this training, gave me a thorough understanding of the responsibilities for lay leadership. As a previous Director of Special Education for Wichita Falls ISD, my major responsibilities included leading the department, making budgetary decisions, supervising personnel and providing training.

I am grateful for the opportunities to serve in the various groups and leadership roles at the local, district, conference, and general church level, indicated above. These experiences gave me the chance to work as a team member, build relationships and be a partner in ministry. My administrative leadership experiences and relationships in our conference and throughout the connection is an asset for me in supporting and doing the work of the delegation.

Answer 5: The issues before our church are countless. Our denomination suffers from a decline in membership, a lack of church vitality, financial difficulties, and continued dividing disagreement on issues ranging from church structure to human sexuality. Many of our important issues stem from the brokenness of the world wide nature of the church and the current structure of our church in how we want to be in ministry with our contextual mission field.

Our jurisdiction will be electing new bishops and our conference will be receiving a new bishop. The selection of bishops with necessary leadership skills and the ability to cast a vision is especially critical for this time in our denomination.

Answer 6: Even though the issues and questions before the church are huge and continue to divide us, I believe God is not through with Methodism. How we evolve in response to these issues remains to be seen. I do believe God is calling us to love our neighbor completely and without conditions while creating, fostering and sustaining vital congregations and preparing them to be in ministry with a diverse and younger mission field in new creative and changing ways.

Full Name: Kathleen Rozanne Pryor
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Ethnicity: Black, African American
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District: Metro



Answer 1: I currently serve as the Executive Director of GO Camp, who's mission is to give access to the camp experience for those who do not have the means to afford our larger camp sites. GO Camp brings camp to local communities to meet the people where they are. In the past I have also served as a US-2 Missionary through the United Methodist Church.

Answer 2: I would like to serve as a Delegate for 2020 because many of the current delegates I feel do not represent me well ethically or in age. And I feel NTC would benefit from having more delegates under the age of 40 as well more persons of color.

Answer 3: My experience has been limited to just attending I have not had an active voting role before. But I believe the people I serve and my experience would benefit the conference and global church.

Answer 4: My experience ranges from serving as an US-2 Missionary where I specialized in child advocacy for the state of Mississippi. For my internship for SMU-Perkins I served as a Faith and Justice Educator with United Methodist Women National Office.

Answer 5: After special conference addressing the hurt that many of our brothers and sisters of the UMC experienced. As well not just talking about doing what is just and right as the Global Church but actually making actions towards justice.

Answer 6: God is calling the UMC to put actions to the prayers and beliefs we claim to have, because faith without works is dead, and I do not want to see the church that has been a part of my major parts of life die.

Full Name: Billy Ratcliff
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Church: St. Luke "Community" UMC
District: Metro



Answer 1: Lay Leader
Council chair
District Lay Leader
Conference Lay leader
Finance committee

Answer 2: Insights on issues that come before the Conference Based on my experience

Answer 3: Delegate to General/Jurisdiction conferences

Answer 4: Chaired DART Board
United Way Committee Member

Answer 5: Work to Create Harmony in the greater Church

Answer 6: Go into the community in providing Ministry in the Communities where we live

Full Name: Cynthia Rives
Clergy or Lay: Lay
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Ethnicity: Caucasian, European American
Occupation: Retired
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Church: Denton First UMC
District: North Central



Answer 1: I serve on my local church's United Methodist Women executive committee as vice president. I serve on the mission committee and am part of the First Meal program which is in ministry with the homeless in Denton. I serve on the NTC UMW executive committee and represent the South Central Jurisdiction as a national director of UMW. I serve on the NTC Church & Society Committee.

Answer 2: I'd like to serve as a delegate to GC/JC to provide positive leadership as we journey to the future. I feel the experience I have had serving on a previous delegation to General Conference will enable me to make a positive contribution to the work of the group and help work with other delegations through my connections in United Methodist Women.

Answer 3: I served on the Central Texas Conference delegation as the first reserve delegate to General Conference 2012. I feel that experience will help me contribute to the North Texas delegation because I have a better understanding of the work, the schedule, and responsibilities of the delegation.

Answer 4: I am currently a National Director of United Methodist Women. I have served as a Conference President for the Central Texas Conference UMW. I served on the CTC delegation to General Conference in 2012.

Answer 5: I feel the most important issues facing the church are how to move forward after the judicial council decision concerning GC 2019, how to bring unity where it's possible, and in spite of everything else that's going on, how to find a way to focus on our present and future as we live to transform the world for Jesus Christ.

Answer 6: I feel God is calling the UMC to be a church that is opening our doors and going out into the community to be in mission with those who will "take our hand".
We need to be Faith, Hope, Love in Action!

Full Name: Daniel Soliz
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District: Metro



Answer 1: I have been the lay leader in my local church for many years. This is my first year serving as chair of the Staff Parish Relations Committee. I am one of four individuals that teach the older adults Sunday school class. I taught youth Sunday school classes for many years.

Answer 2: Serving on the delegation would allow me to share the experience I have gained as a delegate or alternate to General and Jurisdictional Conferences since 2000. I have a good grasp of the issues that will face the delegates at both the GC and JC next year, as well as knowledge of how many of these issues have been addressed in the past. I developed relationships with various interest groups and stakeholders over the years, and I want to use these relationships to help address issues that will be faced at both GC and JC.

Answer 3: I was elected to the North Texas Conference delegation to GC2016. I was previously elected the lay delegate in 2000 and subsequently an alternate delegate in 2004, 2008 and 2012 in the former Rio Grande Conference. I believe this experience provides me a very good understanding of how General Conference works, as well as the dynamics that surround the election of bishops at Jurisdictional Conference.

Answer 4: My local church leadership experience informs and instructs my perspectives on many of the issues faced at GC and JC. I have never taken positions on issues facing GC or JC without first considering how it could affect local churches. By serving on the Metro District Committee on Ministry and the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry over the last three years, I have gained better insight as to how we can help people develop and respond to their calling, be it as lay or clergy. As the current Lay Leader-elect, I am blessed to be working with leaders from across the conference and to learn of the many ministries being realized at the local level. Additionally, I have served on three general agencies (General Council on Ministries, General Board of Global Ministries, and General Board of Church and Society) over the last 25 years.

Answer 5: Nothing was really resolved at the special GC in 2019. The most important issue facing GC2020 will be this: Will the UMC remain intact, or will we split? Jurisdictional Conference has as its basic function the election and assignment of bishops. Our conference will get a new bishop in 2020 and so the decisions of this JC will greatly impact the NTC.

Answer 6: The primary mission of the UMC remains the same, which is to reach people with the good news of God's love and salvation in Jesus Christ. There are many communities that are ripe for our evangelistic efforts. Our New Faces New Spaces initiative is a great way to reach these communities. The UMC should also continue to speak out against injustice in its many forms, be it at the local, national, or global level.

Full Name: Gretchen Faye Toler Debus
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District: Metro



Answer 1: General Conference delegation (see below) Board of Ordained Ministry Center for Leadership Development Advisory Board Board of Pensions and Health Benefits (2012-15) Metro District nominations (2009-11) Oak Lawn UMC Grow (discipleship) chair OLUMC Church Council Chair (2017-18) OLUMC Trustees (2016-18) OLUMC Lay Leader (2007-2012) Certified Lay Speaker OLUMC Adult Sunday School teacher OLUMC Music Ministry

Answer 2: Like many United Methodists, I had great hopes that 2019 General Conference would offer a way forward for unity. Instead, it became clear that the fault lines in our current denomination structure are deep and beyond repair. I believe that God is doing a new thing in the brokenness and that we have the opportunity and a privilege to participate in what God is doing. This will require steadfastness, willingness to make difficult decisions, to listen to and appreciate those with different perspectives and to work collaboratively.

Answer 3: Delegate 2019, 1st alternate delegate 2016, jurisdictional reserve delegate 2019 I am grateful for the opportunity to serve on previous delegations. The General Conference experience is truly like drinking from a firehose. It takes time and experience to understand the process and the political dynamics that drive the process. After participating in three General Conferences, I am particularly grateful for the relationships and connections with people from across the denomination and the ways that these connections have informed my decisions and enriched my perspective.

Answer 4: Brite Divinity School Board of Visitors (2016-present) Resounding Harmony Board of Directors (2012-2019) Hillcrest High School Band Boosters President (2007-9)

Answer 5: 1. A realistic exit plan for churches that choose to leave the denomination 2. Explore the ways that, even in separation, we might continue to share financial and missional resources 3. Electing bishops with integrity and courage to lead in a difficult time 4. A way for the United States church to be effective in our particular culture and context

Answer 6: To connect with people on the margins of our world and live out God's message of love and grace and inclusion.

Full Name: Herman L. Totten
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District: North Central



Answer 1: My current service/involvement includes:

General Church

1. President of Association of Conference Directors of Lay Servant Ministries (ACDLSM)

North Texas Annual Conference

1. Conference Director of North Texas Conference of Lay Servants Ministries

2. Lay Member of Board of Ordained Ministries

3. Member of Standing Rules Committee

4. Co-facilitator of Annual Laity Event, Listening for the Way Forward

Trinity United Methodist Church in Denton, Texas

1. Lay Representative to Annual Conference

2. Member of Finance Committee

3. Teacher of Adult Sunday School Class

4. Church Historian

Answer 2: I wish to serve as a delegate to the General Conference (May 5 -15, 2020 in Minneapolis, Minnesota) and to the South Central Jurisdictional Conference (July 15-18, 2020 in The Woodlands, Texas).

I wish to serve as a delegate because I feel that I have the requisite experience and maturity to be an effective delegate. I do believe holy conferencing and love for our perceived enemies would help consensus decision making, though not as much as casting our crowns of biblical or sociological correctness at the feet of Jesus. For me, the question that should haunt our deliberations is: Where is the love? I have been very successful in invoking love on committees and deliberate bodies of which I have been a part.

Answer 3: 2004: General Conference Alternate Delegate in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

2004: Jurisdictional Conference Delegate in Corpus Christi, Texas

2008: Visitor to General Conference in Fort Worth, Texas (at my own expense)

2016: Reserve Delegate to General Conference in Portland, Oregon

2016: Reserve Delegate to Jurisdictional Conference in Wichita, Kansas

2019: Reserve Delegate to Special Session of the General Conference in St. Louis, Missouri

1981 to present: Lay Representative to the North Texas Annual Conference

I clearly understand the concept of Holy Conferencing, as demonstrated by my constant service to the North Texas Annual Conference. With the experience garnered through my annual service to the NTC, I understand well the processes and needs of the UMC, and how best to foster coalitions to the betterment of the UMC.

Answer 4: I have served Trinity in many capacities for many years since joining the church in 1980 (the year Trinity UMC-Denton was established). As examples, I have been Chair of the Administrative Board and a member of the Board of Trustees and the Finance Committee. I have also served Trinity as the Church Historian and Chair of Stewardship. One quality I have found critical in my service is forbearance. This is an indispensable asset for a servant leader of people. A member of my church describes my committee style when she says, "I have served with Herman on several committees and seen him facilitate a consensus of view points into a plan of action. He has a uniquely calm manner of presenting facts and sifting through situations --

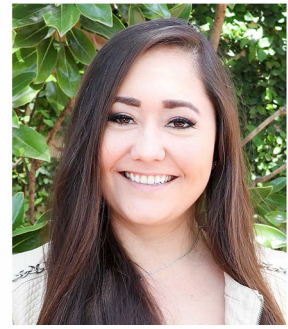
it seems that formulating and executing a plan is second nature to him.”

In my professional career, I served as Dean of the University of North Texas (UNT) College of Information and as UNT Vice President for Community Engagement. These professional experiences helped me build consensus and put into action plans that drew UNT and the local community closer together. This ability to forge coalitions of disparate groups will be well suited to service as a General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference delegate.

Answer 5: I believe that our aspiration to find a way forward beyond our impasse in the Special Session of the General Conference 2019 was paramount to the mission of the UMC. We really tried to listen to people and their values as well as to understand them as people, rather than as issues. We failed miserably in achieving our goal. Consequently, I believe that finding a way forward is the most important issue facing the 2020 General and Jurisdictional Conferences. It is imperative that we keep the unity in the United Methodist Church.

Answer 6: I believe that we must remember and emphasize the mission of the UMC. We cannot forget that the mission of the UMC is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Full Name: Jessica Vittorio
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Church: Dallas First UMC
District: Metro



Answer 1: First United Methodist Church Dallas: Young Adult Bible Study Leader, Member of the Adult Education Committee, Disciple Class Member
Bridgeport Camp and Conference Center: Senior High Camp Girl's Senior Counselor Summer '17
Southwestern University: Methodist Student Movement President, Collegiate MSM Conference Attendee
Grace Avenue United Methodist Church: Youth Leadership Team '05-'08, Adult Mission Trip Team to Czech Republic '06-'09
North Texas CCYM '05-'08: DCYM President, JYMO Attendee

Answer 2: As a life long Methodist, the church has always served a very important role in my life. While there are many young people that have taken to exiting the church during these trying and emotional times, I want more than anything to see the church succeed and thrive in the decades to come. On a more individualized level, I want to ensure that every person has the opportunity and welcome into the UMC that I have always had. I want each one of God's beloved children to feel the same sense of safety, love, support, and protection that I have access to within the church. Having participated in the governance of the church for many years, I understand that to effectuate either of these goals I have to work within the system. While I do not feel called to ordained ministry, I undoubtedly feel called to serve the church in lay leadership by providing a voice to the perspectives of the North Texas Conference. I believe that my past experience, my professional expertise, my ability to effectively communicate, and my interpersonal skills in organizing and connecting with individuals of varying backgrounds and experiences would serve as a valuable asset to the GC/JC delegation from the North Texas Conference.

Answer 3: I have participate in GC/JC in some capacity since I was in high school. Throughout my years as a young adult/adult with the United Methodist Church I have had the opportunity to participate in various levels of church governance. I have a deep appreciation for the processes of these proceedings, and understand the necessary rules, as well as the importance of communicating and working with other delegates to achieve the goals of the North Texas conference. Professionally, I served a chief legislative counsel in the United States House of Representatives, and have experience drafting complex legislation, understanding parliamentary procedure, and communicating complex legislative concepts and workings to large groups of people. Having participated in a number of similar events, I am confident that I would be effective in communicating the interests and perspectives of the North Texas conference. Additionally, I am extremely passionate about the church, and dedicated to seeing its' continued success in the coming decades.

Answer 4: I have had leadership within almost every level of the church - high school/youth, college, and now adult ministry. I have an understanding of how the church operates, the organizational structure, the rules of the proceedings, and the challenges associated with operating within all of these boundaries. I believe one of the most unique, and strongest, features of the UMC is our belief in a laity/clergy driven legislative system. This dynamic sets an important tone for the internal workings of the church, and presents two distinct, yet critical, viewpoints on the issues facing the church going into the future. Having worked with many of the North Texas laity and clergy throughout the years, I am comfortable communicating with both types of delegates, and appreciate the variances in these perspectives, which I believe is critical in unifying voices to achieve the goals of the NTC at the next conference. Additionally, I believe being a young person actively involved in the church is an extremely important characteristic I possess that would make me effective in this position. Having watched the Special Conference proceedings, only 7% of the delegates were under the age of 35. As a 28 year old who has grown up in various young adult ministries of the church, that statistic is absolutely unacceptable.

able and frankly extremely frustrating. The church as a whole does a terrific job of ensuring that youth's voices at the middle, high school, and collegiate levels are taken into consideration, but it has failed in a very big way at ensuring that these youth are also represented when they transition into young adults. During the Special Conference, a petition circulated that was signed by over 15,000 young adults which attempted to express their views to the general delegation - but this population is not one that should be represented solely by a petition with no voting power. This demographic, the demographic that will eventually take control of the church in the decades to come, should have an active role in determining the future of the denomination as it effects us most directly. I have the experience, and the connections, to be an effective voice for this demographic of the North Texas Conference.

Answer 5: This is an emotional question for me to answer following the Special Conference. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the Special Conference, however, I watched every single second via the live stream from my home and office in Dallas. As a lifelong Methodist, I have struggled over the past few weeks with how to reconcile the supportive, and even life saving, experience I have always had with the church with the outcome of the Special Conference. The church, for me, has always been a safe haven - the place that I run to when everything else in my life seems to be crashing down. Over the years, the church has been a physical location of safety, a place to grow spiritually and emotionally, individuals within whom I have found community, and so much more. This - to me - is what God calls the church to be - a direct reflection of the love and support God provides to us; unfortunately, I believe we have been leaning away from that mission. I believe in the stated purpose of the UMC, to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. When I hear that mission, I don't hear any contingencies and I don't see any asterisks. That mission does not say "to make disciples* of Jesus Christ - *but only if those disciples are heterosexual, old, rich, white dudes". In my opinion, the church has been consistently failing many groups within our communities - most notably and recently the LGBTQA community, but also our minority communities, our young people, and our impoverished communities. In addition to the acceptance, representation, and support of traditionally underrepresented or alienated groups, we will also have to address the implications of financial/governance decisions and how these will impact the long term viability of the church. As a lawyer who works with the ramifications of internal governance of entities every single day, I have a deep appreciation for the destruction that can be caused by exit or separation within an entity - especially as it relates to the financial viability of the underlying organization. The issues to be addressed at the next GC/JC are not just political issues, they are also practical and logistical issues.

I understand and appreciate that these are not new issues facing the UMC, but rather divisive issues we have grappled with for decades. But the manner in which we address these issues has to change - the Special Conference was absolutely gut wrenching to watch. The behavior of many of the delegates, the manipulation tactics, the lack of respect or love communicated in the floor speeches, it was all almost too much to witness. The issues facing the UMC are not going to change over the next few years - but our tactics, which have proven ineffective, must change. I believe the first step in doing that is to incorporate new voices, and new perspectives, into the conversation on the conference's behalf.

Answer 6: I believe God is calling the UMC to the same mission it has always been called to - to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. While I believe we have become distracted from that mission, God's fundamental vision for the church has not changed. So, how do we achieve that mission from a practical perspective? By truly upholding our own ideals - Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors. It is my belief that God always intended the church to be a place of communication. Communication of varying, and sometimes conflicting, ideals and perspectives - but a place of communication none the less. Through communication we evolve as individuals, we more thoroughly understand and respect our neighbor, and we are able to see the bigger picture of God's plan and intention for ourselves as individuals and as a community. But the problem is communication, as we have seen, can be hard. It is often times underestimated; however, the reality is that communication is emotional, tolling, and strenuous work. But it is absolutely critical work, and work that must take place if we seek to live out the values of open hearts, open minds, open doors. The UMC must commit to fostering dialogue with those we disagree with instead of looking for a perpetual method of exit, to create new and dynamic communities and environments for communion between individuals and God, and to selflessly serve those within our own communities and around the world. I believe the UMC is called to be a place of dialogue, a place of acceptance, a place of refuge, and most importantly a place that embodies and exemplifies the unconditional love that God has for us.

Full Name: Sally Vonner
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District: Metro



Answer 1: Presently I serve the NTC as a lay member to the Annual Conference and through the mission and ministry of the United Methodist Women at all levels: local, district, conference, jurisdiction and national. Previously, I've held multiple local church leadership roles (administrative council chair, finance committee, pastor-parish committee). I was involved in a new church plant before becoming a member of Grand Prairie FUMC where I served as an intern and later the evangelism chair. At the conference level, I served as staff for 12 years, as well as member of the Board of Ordained Ministry--Conference Relations Committee and as a General Board of Global Ministries missionary for three years. Also served as Jurisdictional delegate in 2008 and 2016, and had key role in founding the NTC Justice for Our Neighbors ministry and the Anti-Racism Team.

Answer 2: I want to serve as a delegate because I love The UMC and want to see unity prevail. I believe that I can make a difference in reviewing and acting on general/jurisdictional conference legislation with culturally competent lens to inform its impact locally and globally, particularly for women, children, youth and people of color. I also bring my strong faith and spiritual grounding.

Answer 3: I have attended every General Conference since 2004 and served as delegate to Jurisdictional Conference in 2008 and 2016 and reserve General Conference delegate in 2008, 2016 and 2019. This previous experience helped me be aware of how the legislative process works and the importance of having diverse voices, particularly underrepresented (women and people of color) involved in the legislative process. The experiences also revealed to me how much work we have yet to do regarding inclusiveness and inviting the church to see with the eyes of Jesus. One has to have stamina and determination to lead and fully engage before and after General/Jurisdictional Conference, one must be fully committed.

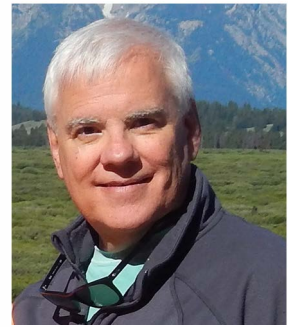
Answer 4: Fortunately the NTC delegations when I served in 2008, 2016 and 2019 have been inclusive of all delegates leading in reviewing and sharing details of the legislation before and on-site. Therefore I was given the opportunity to be fully involved in the work of the delegation. Also my engagement with the national office of the United Methodist Women, Justice For Our Neighbors, Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR), Methodist Representation and Caucus of Hispanic Americans (MARCHA) and other racially diverse communities, along with participation in consultations with Native American women in 2013 and Central Conference women delegates since 2012 has prepared me for leadership and equipped me with an expansive worldview.

Answer 5: The most important issues facing The UMC:

* determining how we are going to thrive in the 21st century and beyond as disciples of Jesus Christ engaging with God in making disciples for the transformation of the world; *committing to inclusiveness and removing barriers for full participation by all members of the church. We still have more to do towards including people of color, women, youth and LGBTQIA+ members; *how/can we remain as The UMC.

Answer 6: We the members of The UMC need to look inwardly and reconcile how we claim to be disciples when we exclude rather than welcome all as did Jesus (Matthew 25:31-46). Once we can "see again," like blind Bartemeus, then we can move forward in discipleship with God making disciples for the transformation of the world. As disciples we can finally move from seeing the plank in our neighbor's eye to removing the plank in our own eye. Our present anger/retaliation mindsets "will become passion to make the wrong right." (Bishop Robert Barron) -- with acts of love as Jesus commanded (John 13:34-35).

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District: Metro



Answer 1: General Conference Delegation 2004 and 2016, Lay Leader and Building Committee Chair at Cochran Chapel UMC; District Committee On Ministry 2000-2012; Member; Annual Conference more than 20 years. Rays of Light, Where Special Children Shine, - 5 years; Created

Answer 2: The connectional church is broken. I have a vision for a new connection which gives us space for loving respect. We cannot continue to battle with each other over single issues and remain in covenant. I believe we can create new bonds which will allow us the room to be true to our beliefs and maintain our relationships.

Answer 3: As part of the team in 2004, 2016 and 2019, I believe my experience and commitment is valuable. Relationships matter when trying to work toward solutions in difficult matters. I've written and reached out to persons 'across the aisle' to see how we can find common ground.

Answer 4: As President of the Dad's Club at a predominantly Hispanic and African-American elementary school, I had my eyes opened to cross-cultural work. I learned to work more effectively with men and staff who were of different ethnic backgrounds and experiences. As a solo practitioner for 40 years, I have worked effectively with a cross-section of the North Texas community for decades.

Answer 5: We will make pivotal decisions for the life of the United Methodist Church in 2020 regarding bishops, human sexuality and whether or not the US will be part of the global church.

Answer 6: I believe the church is called to model the love of Christ to each other and to the world. We need to model Christ's love and acceptance to men and women everywhere. We should be treating each other with respect and love, not telling each other to get out.

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Answer 1: I was a founding member of Grace Avenue UMC. Over the last 20 years, I have served in almost everyone of the leadership roles including Lay Leader, Finance Chair, etc. I have served as a delegate to the North Texas Conference multiple times and I currently serve on the 380 corridor strategy team and the new Asset management team. I am also the North Central Texas lay leader and I am member of the Board of Laity.

Answer 2: I have taken four companies from start-up to maturity; from losing money to making money; from not growing to high growth. In order to make this happen, I have had to reorganize the organizations multiple times to meet the needs of the customers and the employees. As I watch what has been happening at General conference, I feel like someone with Organizational experience and the ability to manage through organizational changes could be of great benefit over the coming years. I feel like God has given me these types of experiences over the years to use them now to help the Global United Methodist Church. Without changes, we will fail our members and future members.

Answer 3: I have no experience as a GC/JC delegate, but I have been an entrepreneur for over 30 years building and selling businesses. I have been a member of several Boards. I understand the "politics" (an ugly word, but true) that is involved in ushering in a new change.

Answer 4: I have helped start a church and I have assisted in the growth of that church for the past 20 years. I serve as the Lay Leader in the North Central District in which we have implemented a new Laity Leadership Team in an effort to change the way churches work together. I have been a member of multiple strategy teams within the conference. I am a lay servant within the conference. I have served on Boards and I am now the President of a charitable organization in Frisco that feeds over 1,000 children each weekend that would otherwise go hungry. In addition to charity work, I have served as CEO or COO of multiple businesses over the past 30 years.

Answer 5: I know we are all focus on the issue of homosexuality and the impact on the LGBTQ+ community, but I feel like this is just one issue although a very important one. BTW - I hate saying issue, because it is not just an issue; it is a person. If we are able to get through this one, then there will be one right behind it. We are spending millions of dollars on symptoms. If we look beyond the symptoms and get down to the root cause, we will find that we are not organized appropriately to deal with Global needs and concerns. We do not use technology to keep from spending millions of dollars on personal beliefs in which we will never change each others mind. That money has to be used to Make disciples that make a difference. Not, on us getting together to simply beat each up.

Answer 6: Let's stop talking about what we do not agree on. Let's talk about what we do agree on. Can we not have a Global set of beliefs and then allow each cultural group to decide on their own book of discipline based on that local believe system. If we are called to love one another, then let's allow each other the freedom to live into their own beliefs. Only then can we move from arguing and tearing one another down to talking about how we can change the world.