



Practicing Hope

Celebration of Ministry

June 14, 2026

Renaissance Schaumburg Convention Center



Northern Illinois Conference

OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Celebration of Ministry

A Service of Commissioning, Ordination & Recognition of Ministries & Holy Communion

Sunday, June 14, 2026, 7:00 p.m.

You are welcome to stand at the times in the service when individuals are recognized, commissioned and ordained. As we stand where we are in silent, prayerful support, we embody the Church in affirming the work of the Holy Spirit in these persons.

In keeping with the significance of the occasion, please refrain from the use of photography or videography, especially at the times of commissioning and ordination.

Please do not approach the worship platform with phones, cameras or video recorders. Photos will be available online at the UMCNIC Flickr page, [flickr.com/photos/umcnicac/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/umcnicac/) to download for free.

Following the service, all are invited to greet the honorees in Schaumburg Rooms E-H.

Gathering Music

*House of the Lord
Build My Life
Firm Foundation*

NIC Praise Team

* Processional Hymn

In Christ Alone with The Solid Rock

Words on the screen

* Call to Worship

Eugene Williams

Leader: We come to worship our God, who has done wonders in our lives.
People: **God anoints us with joy and light, gifts from the treasures of God's heart.**
Leader: We come to follow Jesus, who bears our lives with grace and hope.
People: **Jesus would send us into the brokenness of the world to bring healing.**
Leader: We come to be touched by the Spirit, who brings gentleness and peace for all.
People: **The Spirit would enable us to offer reconciliation and justice to everyone we meet.**

Centering Prayer

Bishop Dan Schwerin

Bishop: The grace of Jesus Christ be with you all.
People: **And also with you.**
Bishop: We come together to praise God, to hear the Holy Word, and to seek for ourselves and others the power, presence and direction of the Holy Spirit. Let us pray.
People: **Eternal God, by Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit you gave your apostles many excellent gifts. Give your grace to all servants of your church, that we may with diligence and faithfulness fulfill our various ministries. Grant that we your people may follow where you lead, perfect our ministries, and live in joyful obedience to your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

*Practicing
Hope*



Celebration of Ministry (continued)

Recognition of Common Ministry & Reaffirmation of Baptism

Bishop Dan Schwerin, Grant Showalter-Swanson

Bishop: Ministry is the work of God, done by the people of God.
Through baptism all Christians are made part of the priesthood of all believers,
the church, Christ's body, made visible in the world.
We all share in Christ's ministry of love and service for the redemption of the human family and the whole of creation.
Therefore, in celebration of our common ministry, I call upon all God's people gathered here:

Remember you are baptized, and be thankful.

All: We reaffirm our baptism and our common call to ministry. Thanks be to God!

Introduction of Guests

Danita R. Anderson
Giovanni Arroyo, GCORR General Secretary
Sally Vonner, General Secretary/CEO United Women in Faith
Craig Howard, Executive Presbyterian of Chicago

Recognitions

70 Years of Ordination of Women
40 Years as a Reconciling Ministries Conference
30 Years of the Ordination of Deacons

Danita R. Anderson

Recognition of Set-Apart Ministries

Recognition of Newly Licensed Local Pastors

Brenda Morris

Rachel Grover
Joy Hayag
Shawn Saldano
SamStanes Stephen Raj



Leader: Eternal God, you call each and every one of us to love you and love our neighbors.
People: **Today we celebrate those who have answered your call as local pastors in past year.**
Leader: Fill them with the presence, power, and hope your Spirit brings.
People: **Empower them to spread your Word connecting all into the body of Christ.**
Leader: Sanctify their lives that they may reveal your love.
People: **Use them as your means of grace as they go into the world, in the strength of your Spirit, to give themselves for others. Amen!!**
Bishop: I invite you to extend your hands in blessing toward these persons.
Let us pray:
Bless these local pastors who have committed their lives— their gifts and skills, time and resources to your service.
They are the lifeblood of our mission, bringing Christ to the world.
May they experience the joy of service as they invite and lead others in your church. Amen.

Scripture Reading

Romans 5:3-5 (CEB)

Audrine Rochet (Spanish)
Cerna Castro Rand (Tagalog)

But not only that! We even take pride in our problems, because we know that trouble produces endurance, endurance produces character, and character produces hope. This hope doesn't put us to shame, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

Leader: The Word of God in scripture ...among us... within us...
People: **Thanks be to God**

Celebration of Ministry (continued)

The Word in Music

How Firm a Foundation
Firm Foundation (He Won't)

NIC Praise Team

Sermon

Hope Never Fails

Bishop Dan Schwerin

*Response to the Word

An Affirmation of Faith for Immigrant Rights

Luis F. Reyes-Rosario

by Rev. Dr. Lydia Muñoz

We believe in a God who journeys.

A God who called Abraham and Sarah to leave their homeland.

A God who heard the cries of enslaved migrants in Egypt and led them across borders into freedom.

We believe in Jesus Christ, a child carried across borders for safety,
a brown-skinned teacher with no place to lay his head,
a Savior who said, "I was a stranger and you welcomed me."

We believe the Holy Spirit moves in every language,
speaks in every accent, and falls on all flesh—
documented and undocumented, citizen and newcomer alike.

We affirm that every human being is made in the image of God.
Not in the image of a passport. Not in the image of a visa. Not in the image of a wall.

We reject the lie that some lives are illegal.
We reject policies rooted in fear, racism, and exploitation.
We reject systems that profit from detention, separation, and despair.

We proclaim that immigrant rights are human rights.
That families belong together. That children deserve safety.
That workers deserve dignity. That asylum seekers deserve protection.
That every community deserves to flourish without fear.

Therefore, we commit ourselves to welcome the stranger,
to accompany the vulnerable, to advocate for just laws,
and to stand in sacred solidarity until justice rolls down like waters
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.



Presentation of Persons to Be Commissioned, Recognized and Ordained

To be commissioned for the work of a deacon:

Sarah Champlin Boutell
Allison N. Kojak

To be commissioned for the work of an elder:

Jonah Briggs Boutell
Nadan Cho
Hwankyu Kim
Alex Sangwon Lee
Kelly McKune
Chanje (CJ) Woo

To be ordained as a elder:

Abby Savannah Holcombe
Brian Smith, sponsor

Celebration of Ministry (continued)

Bishop addresses the Laity:

Who presents these candidates to be ordained, commissioned, or recognized?

All Laity: **We have recommended them in our local congregations.
We present them with our prayers and support.**

Members of the Board of Ordained Ministry address all the Elders:

We have examined these candidates according to the standards of our Discipline and this annual conference of The United Methodist Church.

All Elders in Full Connection:

**We present Abby Savannah Holcombe for ordination as an elder.
We present her with our prayers and support.**



Members of the Board of Ordained Ministry:

We present Jonah Briggs Boutell, Nadan Cho, Hwanky Kim, Alex Sangwon Lee, Kelly McKune, and Chanje (CJ) Woo for commissioning as provisional members preparing for ordained ministry as elders and Sarah Champlin Boutell and Allison N. Kojak preparing for ordained ministry as deacon.

We present them with our prayers and support.

Bishop:

These persons are by God's grace to be commissioned or ordained to ministry in Christ's holy church. Those authorized by the Church to inquire about them have discerned that they are persons of sound learning and of Christian character, and possess the necessary signs of God's grace, and have demonstrated a profound commitment to serve Jesus Christ. Therefore, we believe them to be duly called to serve God.

We ask you, people of God, to declare your assent to the commissioning, and ordination of these persons. Do you trust that they are worthy, by God's grace, to be commissioned, recognized or ordained?

People: **Yes! Worthy! Thanks be to God!**

Bishop: Will you uphold them in their ministry?

People: **With God's help, we will!**

Let there be applause, shouts and rejoicing!

The General Examination

After the examination, the candidates for ordination are seated and commissioning sponsors will robe those to be commissioned.

The Examination of Persons Being Commissioned and Ordained

Song of Worship

Available

NIC Praise Team

*Practicing
Hope*

Celebration of Ministry (continued)

The Prayer of Commissioning with the Laying on of Hands

Bishop Dan Schwerin

Bishop: By affirming the covenant of baptism, all members of Christ's holy church pledge to serve as Christ's representatives in the world.

Christ gave all of us this command: "Ask the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his harvest."
We have asked, and the Lord has answered. These sisters and brothers know our Savior's concern for God's people, see the plentiful harvest, and are ready to respond generously to the Lord in the words of the prophet:
"Here I am; send me." ...

... Deepen their sense of purpose as they exercise commissioned ministry.
Empower them, with all of your people, to heal the sick,
love the outcast, resist evil, preach the Word,
and give themselves freely for your name's sake.

The bishop, standing behind and laying both hands upon the shoulders of each candidate, prays:

Pour out your Holy Spirit upon _____.
Send him/her/them now to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ,
to announce the reign of God, and to equip the church for ministry,
in the name of the Triune God. Amen.

Let all the people of God say:

People: Amen.



The Ministry of the Deacon (Renewal)

Bishop Dan Schwerin

Bishop: **A deacon**
is called to share in Christ's ministry of servanthood,
to relate the life of the community to its service in the world,
to lead others into Christian discipleship,
to nurture disciples for witness and service,
to lead in worship,
to teach and proclaim God's Word,
to assist elders and appointed local pastors at Holy Baptism and Holy Communion, and
where contextually appropriate, to preside at the celebration of the sacraments.
to interpret to the church the world's hurts and hopes,
to serve all people, particularly the poor, the sick, and the oppressed,
and to lead Christ's people in ministries of compassion and justice, liberation and reconciliation,
even in the face of hardship and personal sacrifice.
This is the rule of life and work of a deacon.

Will you, for the sake of the church's life and mission,
reaffirm your covenant to continue your participation in the order of deacons?
Will you continue giving yourself to God through the order of deacons
in order to sustain and build each other up in prayer, study, worship, and service?

Response: I will, with the help of God, and with the help of my siblings in the order of deacons.



Celebration of Ministry (continued)

The Ministry Of Elders

Bishop Dan Schwerin

Bishop: **An elder**

is called to share in the ministry of Christ and of the whole church:
to preach and teach the Word of God
and faithfully administer the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion;
to lead the people of God in worship and prayer;
to lead persons to faith in Jesus Christ;
to exercise pastoral supervision, order the life of the congregation and the connection,
counsel the troubled, and declare the forgiveness of sin;
to lead the people of God in obedience to Christ's mission in the world;
to seek justice, peace, and freedom for all people;
and to take a responsible place in the government of the Church and in service in and to the community.
This is the rule of life and work of an elder.



Do you believe that God has called you to the life and work of an elder?

Response: I do so believe.

Laying on of Hands

The candidate for ordination as an elder is invited to kneel before the bishop as directed.

Family members and friends are invited to stand where they are for silent prayer during the laying on of hands for the ordinand.

The bishop lays both hands on the head of the ordinand, praying:

Almighty God, pour upon Abby Savannah Holcombe the Holy Spirit,
for the office and work of an elder in Christ's holy church.

The candidate places hands on a Bible as the bishop lays hands on the hands of the ordinand and says:

Abby Savannah Holcombe take authority as an elder to preach the Word of God,
to administer the Holy Sacraments and to order the life of the Church;
in the name of our Triune God.

All: **Amen.**

Invitation to Offering

The offerings given today will go towards the United Methodist Ministerial Education Fund (MEF) to support the ongoing work of the Northern Illinois Annual Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, through whose work candidates for ministry are recruited, empowered, and sent to serve on behalf of our conference locally and around the world.

Scan QR code to
donate online



Prayer for the Offering

Noral I. Brown, Board of Ordained Ministry Chair

The Word in Music

Total Praise

NIC Mass Choir

Celebration of Ministry (continued)

Celebration of Eucharist

Bishop Dan Schwerin
Grant Showalter-Swanson

Invitation to the Table

Confession and Peace

People: Merciful God,
We confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have failed to be an obedient church.
We have not done your will, we have broken your law,
we have rebelled against your love, we have not loved our neighbors,
and we have not heard the cry of the needy.
Forgive us, we pray.
Free us for joyful obedience, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Silently confess your sins to God.

Leader: Hear the good news: Christ died for us while we were yet sinners; that proves God's love toward us.
In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

People: In the name of Jesus Christ, we are all forgiven! Glory be to God! Amen.

*The Peace

Leader: The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be always with you.
People: And also with you.

Signs of reconciliation and love may be exchanged

The Great Thanksgiving

Bishop: God is with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Bishop: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them up to God.**

Bishop: Let us give thanks to the Holy One, our God.

People: **It is good and beautiful to give God our praise.**

Bishop: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you...
... We praise your name and join their unending hymn:

People: **Holy, holy, holy One, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of God.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Bishop: Holy are you and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ...
... And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice,
in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

People: **Dying, Christ destroyed our death.
Rising, Christ restores our life.
Christ will come again in glory.**

The Lord's Prayer

(Please pray in the language or form of your preference.)



Celebration of Ministry (continued)

Breaking the Bread and Sharing of the Cup

All communion elements are vegan and gluten free.

They will be distributed to the congregation by the newly ordained and commissioned and others at the direction of the ushers.

Communion Hymns

*For Everyone Born
One Bread, One Body
Cornerstone*

NIC Praise Team

Prayer After Receiving

Bishop: Let us pray.

People: **We thank you, gracious God, for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us,
And united us in the communion of your Holy Spirit.
We bless you for raising up among us faithful servants. Clothe them and us with your righteousness
And grant that we, with them, may glorify you by giving ourselves to others,
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*Dismissal with Blessing

Bishop Dan Schwerin, Grant Showalter-Swanson

Bishop: The grace of Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all always.

Deacon: Go in peace to serve God and your neighbor in all that you do.

People: **We are sent in Christ's name. Thanks be to God!**

* Hymn of Celebration (Recessional)

All the People Said Amen

NIC Praise Team

Postlude

I Thank God

NIC Praise Team

We are thankful to all who participated and coordinated the Celebration of Ministry.

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Celebration of Ministry (continued)

Order of Procession

Marshals: John Bell & Alka Lyall

Cross: Grant Showalter-Swanson

Christ Candle: Cerna Castro Rand

Bible: Auderine Rochet

Chalice: Paul Lee

Lamp: Beverly D. Dukes

Bowl, Pitcher & Towel: Sherry Steele

2026 Candidates for Commissioning and Ordination, and Sponsors

2026 Class of Local Pastors

The Licensed, Commissioned, Consecrated, and Ordained Ministers of the Northern Illinois Conference

The Leadership Team of the Board of Ordained Ministry

Northern Illinois Conference Cabinet

Eugene Williams, Co-Lay Leader

Ecumenical Guest, Rev. Dr. Craig Howard, Executive Presbyter of Chicago

Rev. Dr. Giovanni Arroyo, General Secretary GCORR

Sally Vonner, General Secretary/CEO United Women in Faith

Bishop Dan Schwerin, Resident Bishop

Order of Recession

Marshals: John Bell & Alka Lyall

Cross: Grant Showalter-Swanson

Christ Candle: Cerna Castro Rand

Bible: Auderine Rochet

Chalice: Paul Lee

Lamp: Beverly D. Dukes

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Danita R. Anderson, Assistant to the Bishop

Eugene Williams, Co-Lay Leader

Fabiola Grandon-Mayer, Director of Connectional Ministries

Christian Coon, Director of Congregational Development

Victor Melad, Jr., Superintendent, Lake North District

Audrea Nanabray, Superintendent, Lake South District

Wendy Hardin Herman, Superintendent, Prairie Central District

Hwa-Young Chong, Superintendent, Prairie North District

Brian Gilbert, Superintendent, Prairie South District

Luis F. Reyes-Rosario, Chair of Conference Relations, Board of Ordained Ministry

Mary Gay McKinney, Elders Registrar, Board of Ordained Ministry

Kimberly Davis, Deacons Registrar, Board Ordained Ministry

Norval I. Brown, Chair, Board of Ordained Ministry

Caleb Hong, Vice Chair, Board of Ordained Ministry

Tiffany Garcea, Secretary, Board of Ordained Ministry

Scott Himel, Board of Ordained Ministry Leadership Team

Eric Blachford, Board of Ordained Ministry Leadership Team

Melissa Meyers, Board of Ordained Ministry Leadership Team

2026 Newly Commissioned and Ordained Clergy and Sponsors

2026 Class of Local Pastors

The Licensed, Commissioned, Consecrated and Ordained Ministers of the Northern Illinois Annual Conference

The Ministerial Education Fund

On behalf of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry and each of the persons set apart for ministry today, thank you for participating in this ordination service!

Because you are interested in each of these ministers and in quality ministry for each local church, we want you to know how vital the Ministerial Education Fund is in funding the work of the Board of Ordained Ministry, at both the national and conference levels.

The Ministerial Education Fund is a beautiful example of connectional ministry at its best! The fund is a portion of the “Support of the General Church” category within the Apportionment figure for each local church and is 5.8% of the entire apportionment.

The Northern Illinois Conference retains 25% of the funds given to MEF, and uses these funds for (among other things) seminary scholarships, continuing education grants, and developing continuing education events.

Of the 75% of MEF funds sent on to the General Church — approximately 84% is used to support our 13 United Methodist seminaries, and most of the remaining portion supports and enhances the Course of Study, which prepares local pastors.

Therefore, you can see that the MEF has a direct impact upon the quality of ministry at the local church level! We hope and expect that you will be a staunch supporter of the Ministerial Education Fund.

Commissioning and Ordination Glossary

Commissioning relates persons to the annual conference and to the ministry of the provisional clergy members within the annual conference. Commissioning confirms that the person is being sent for service and the church invokes the Holy Spirit to empower commissioned ministers during their time of provisional membership. The provisional period is a time of full service in which one is licensed for the practice of ministry (¶¶ 317.1) and a period of formation in one’s journey toward ordination and full membership in the annual conference (2020/24 Book of Discipline).

Ordination of deacons and elders is both to an office and for a lifetime. Ordination confers a new identity as well as authority for ministry. The new identity of the ordained is always claimed in relation to Christ and his call to leadership and service with the baptized for the life of the world. The authority is always exercised in stewardship of the mysteries of the gospel and of the church’s mission in the world. Ordination has to do with who the person is as well as what the person does in ministry (2020/24 Book of Discipline).

Deaconesses and Home Missioners are laity called by God to a lifetime relationship in The United Methodist Church for engagement with a full-time vocation in ministries of love, justice and service (¶ 1913). They are consecrated by a bishop, then commissioned in their local annual conference.

Local Pastors answer God’s call to serve the mission of Jesus Christ in a local congregation under the authority of a license for pastoral ministry. They are not itinerant ministers and are not ordained or elected into full membership of the annual conference. A local pastor’s authority is within their appointment setting and does not extend beyond it.

Deacons are called by God, authorized by the church, and ordained by a bishop to a lifetime ministry of Word, Service, Compassion, and Justice. They serve the community and congregation in a ministry that connects the two. The deacon’s ministry connects the church’s worship with its service in the world (¶¶ 328-331).

Elders are called by God, authorized by the church, and ordained by a bishop to a lifetime ministry of Word, Sacrament, Order, and Service. The elder serves in ministry and servant leadership giving pastoral leadership to order the life of the congregation (¶¶ 332-335).

Commissioned/Provisional Members are in the ordination step between candidacy and full membership. Those applying for ordination serve as a provisional member for a minimum of two years. Provisional membership ends with ordination. (¶¶ 324-327).

Clergy Members in Full Connection have been ordained as a deacon or elder and have been voted into conference membership. Their lives and work are amenable to the annual conference and they are supported by and accountable to that annual conference.

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and more on social media.
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- Mission Challenge information
- Bishop's Appeal information
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- and more!



Northern Illinois Conference
OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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