

# 2020 Lay Delegate Nominee Profiles

**Karen S. Bonnell**

**Voting Number (9)**

**Email:** LKBonnell@gmail.com

**Church membership:** Steward UMC

**District:** DeKalb



**Please describe your most recent responsibilities in your**

**local church:** Currently I am Steward UMC Lay Leader and sit on the Ad Council. I usually begin the church services, giving announcements and leading the opening liturgy. I am local chairperson of the SPRC. I assist with the Statistical Report and lead the Ministry Review. I cook light supper for our monthly week-night Creative Church. I facilitate the adult Sunday School class. In UMW I am the Spiritual Growth leader. I give 2-3 UMW programs a year and take my turn hosting. I serve on the UMW program committee. I am the chairperson of the Good Neighbor Fund (if someone in our community is in need, we help out). I organize and cook for a fundraiser for GNF. I facilitate the email prayer chain. I am a Certified Lay Servant.

**Please describe your most recent responsibilities in your district:** Currently, I serve as District Co-Lay Leader. I am a member of the District Shepherding team. I am on the Superintendency Committee and have a roll in the farewell to our DS. I have helped with A Day in the Country ministry.

**Please describe your most recent responsibilities on the Conference level:** I am a member of the Board of Laity and have taken an active role in planning Laity Convocation. I serve on the Annual Conference Shepherding Team and have been asked to serve as co-leader of Goal 1, pending approval of legislation.

**Please describe your most recent United Methodist responsibilities beyond the Northern Illinois Conference:** I have not served outside the Northern Illinois Conference.

**Please describe your involvement in your community or other groups that would be an asset to the delegation:** Elected as a Village Trustee for the Village of Steward 2 times, I initiated Stewards becoming a Tree City USA. I have continued to lead the Village in attaining Tree City status for 15 years. I have planned and carried out an Arbor Day Assembly at the school each year for 16 years. Serving as chairperson of the Tree Advisory Board, I have planned and executed two tree plantings, increasing Steward's public tree population by 23%. I check for dangerous or diseased Village trees and consult with tree removal companies about

their removal and report to the Village Board. I continue to be part of a group who dreamed and helped turn a brown area into the green space called Celebration Garden, featuring engraved bricks with the flowers and park benches. I have helped plan and carry out a community night in the summer for 3 years.

**Biographical statement:** My older brother and I were raised by our parents on a farm in DeKalb County where we experienced traditional rural style community support and work ethic. After attending college, my husband, Les, and I raised our 2 daughters in Steward. We now have 2 young grandsons who live in Colorado. I was successfully self-employed in direct sales for 10 years, then worked as a postal clerk for 31, retiring in 2015. For the last 8 years of my career, I served as officer in charge for USPS at Steward. I have been a member of Steward UMC (DeKalb District) all my life, as had my mother and grandmother.

**Please describe anything else you bring to the delegation that would contribute to enhancing the quality of the representation of the Northern Illinois Conference by the delegation:** Throughout my adult life, I have been active in small groups and Bible Studies (including 4 Disciple Bible Studies and 4 years of Bible Study Fellowship International). In addition to reading the Bible daily, I have read books and taken classes furthering my spiritual disciplines. My grandmother taught me to be a life-long learner.

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## Lonnie Chafin

### Voting Number (6)

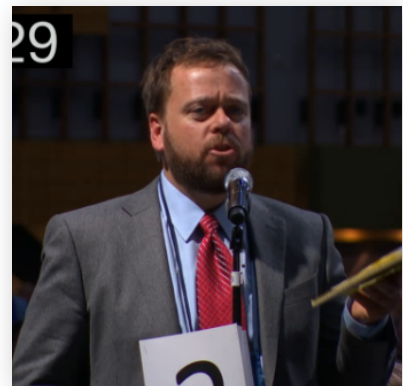
**Email:** lchafin@umcnic.org

**Church membership:** Urban Village Church, Wicker Park site

**District:** Chicago Northwestern

### **Please describe your most recent responsibilities in your**

**district:** I recently joined the Chicago Northwestern District Committee on Church Location where we aid churches in evaluating sales, purchases, and mortgaging of buildings. I serve as President of Church Properties Reimagined, which is a conference related ministry to aid local churches in the Chicago districts in redevelopment of their properties for more sustainable situations.



**Please describe your most recent responsibilities on the Conference level:** I'm glad to serve as Conference Treasurer for 20 years which gives me an upfront view on the financial, legal, benefits, and property challenges of the conference. By virtue of this position, I serve on five Conference boards. As primary staff person to CCFA, we work on developing budgets and assuring the proper and careful spending of conference funds. I am responsible for financial

management and accountability to the conference for the uses of funds entrusted to us. While the experience of any particular local church may differ, the total amount apportioned by the conference has not gone up while i have been Treasurer. As Treasurer for the Conference Board of Pensions and Health i'm a supporting staff person to the choices we make as an annual conference to the health, pension, and benefit programs of the annual conference. By virtue of position, I am Treasurer of the Conference Board of Trustees, which cares for the properties owned by the annual conference and our legal challenges. I serve as Treasurer of the Red Door Fund, which was created by the annual conference to extend mortgages to local churches. We have over 18 million in debt receivable from the local churches and the program is running very successfully. Finally, I am treasurer to the property insurance program of the conference, which assures local churches have the proper coverage for ministry protection. In all of these positions, I strive to understand the risks and needs of the conference and meet those responsibilities with as little negative impact as possible upon the local church, the clergy, or our retirees. I was privileged to serve as a member of the delegation in 2016 which include participation in the 2019 general conference.

**Please describe your most recent United Methodist responsibilities beyond the Northern Illinois Conference:** I am Treasurer of the North Central Jurisdiction of the UMC. That position allows me to participate in the Mission Council of the NCJ. Through that group, I lead the committee planning a gathering of delegations across the jurisdiction for autumn of 2019. I am thrilled to serve on the General Board of Church and Society as Chair of the Finance committee. That has been a wonderful place to learn the ministries and processes of the general agencies and their budgets.

**Please describe your involvement in your community or other groups that would be an asset to the delegation:** I am an active participant in the Uniting Methodist movement which seeks to protect matters of conscience in the church and create a space for LGBTQ inclusion. Through this group i work with others across the denomination who collaborate on a vision forward for the whole church.

**Biographical statement:** I am a life-long Methodist who grew up in youth ministry. I served as a GBGM Mission Intern immediately upon graduation from college, serving first in Budapest Hungary and then in Philadelphia. While in Philadelphia I served a low-income dual-race community with affordable housing and economic development programs, receiving recognition from the City Council of Philadelphia. I moved to Chicago to staff the conference's Shalom Zone ministries in 1997 and then moved to the Conference Treasurer role after that. I am a responsible dog owner.

**Please describe anything else you bring to the delegation that would contribute to enhancing the quality of the representation of the Northern Illinois Conference by the**

**delegation:** Through all of my involvement at all levels of the church i strive to build intentional relationship across theological and geographical lines. I seek out opposing views and listen deeply to the cares of northern Illinois members and clergy. I believe a delegate is to serve the whole church and act in the interest of the Methodist mission of making disciples who transform the world. Being a delegate is an honor and also a responsibility. The belief in service to the whole church underlies my belief that the trials of LGBTQIA persons and allies must stop. My approach to serving on the delegation is to be an active agent using all my relationships to secure from the general conference the best outcome for the Northern Illinois Conference and the Methodist mission globally.

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**Jessie Cunningham**

**Voting Number (2)**

**Email:** JessieHCunningham@gmail.com

**Church membership:** St Andrew UMC, Homewood

**District:** Chicago Southern District



**Please describe your most recent responsibilities in your**

**local church:** I am the Lay Leader, Lay Delegate to Annual Conference and Treasurer

**Please describe your most recent responsibilities on the**

**Conference level:** I am the Co-Conference Lay Leader, Lay Member of the Board of Ordained Ministry, the Episcopacy Committee

**Please describe your most recent United Methodist responsibilities beyond the Northern**

**Illinois Conference:** I am the North Central Jurisdiction representative for the Racial Justice Charter Support Team for the United Methodist Women.

**Please describe your involvement in your community or other groups that would be an**

**asset to the delegation:** I am a member of SWIFT, the Southwest Interfaith Team, a non profit organization of churches, mosques and synagogues located in the south and southwest suburbs of Chicago, I have participated in the CROP Walk for over 20 years, I am the kitchen supervisor for PADS (Public Action to Deliver Shelter) at my church. We provide shelter and meals to homeless persons on Wednesday nights from October to April. I am a member of SPLC, Southern Policy Law Center, NAACP. UNCF, a Member of EJI, Equal Justice Initiative and a charter member of the Legacy Museum of EJI, a charter member of the Martin Luther King Memorial in Washington DC and a charter member National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington DC. I am also a member of RMN, Reconciling Ministries Network, MFSA, Methodist for Social Action.

**Biographical statement:** I am a Southern girl, born and raised in Alabama. I came to Chicago in 1959, graduated from Wendell Phillips High School, attended the University of Illinois at Chicago. I was in an accident in 1993 that left me a quadriplegic. I spent three months at RIC regaining the use of my body from the neck down. I am the mother of two adult children and retired from 41 years of work in the banking industry. I am active in my church and my community. I have served in positions in the United Methodist Women served as the Conference Social Action Coordinator and represented them at the United Nations three years ago. I coordinated a Vigil in my hometown to show solidarity with the people in Charlottesville, VA when there was violence between white nationalist and demonstrators, one woman was killed and protestors injured. I have served as an Election Judge for over 20 years. As Lay Leader and Treasurer of my local church, I work with all the committees and leadership to ensure the church functions efficiently and works to "make disciples of Jesus Christ for transformation of the world."

**Please describe anything else you bring to the delegation that would contribute to enhancing the quality of the representation of the Northern Illinois Conference by the delegation:** I keep abreast of issues that are relevant to the local church and the church universal. I am proficient in the use of computers and active on social media. I am part of several marginalized communities and would bring their perspective to the delegation.

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## **Marc Dean**

### **Voting Number (12)**

**Email:** marcedjones@hotmail.com

**Church membership:** St. Mark UMC, Chicago

**District:** Chicago Southern

**Please describe your most recent responsibilities in your local church:** Alternate Lay Member to Annual Conference St. Mark 125th Anniversary Committee Personnel Committee

**Please describe your most recent responsibilities on the Conference level:** Member Annual Conference Committee

**Please describe your most recent United Methodist responsibilities beyond the Northern Illinois Conference:** Black Methodists For Church Renewal (BMCR) / Pembroke Committee Chairperson Support and Attend Urban Strategy Conferences

**Please describe your involvement in your community or other groups that would be an asset to the delegation:** NAACP



**Biographical statement:** Staff Assistant Chicago BMCR 1977-1983 Director General Board of Global Ministries 1976-1984 Served as the Religious Affairs Officer for the 1983 Harold Washington for Chicago Mayoral campaign Scout Master at Southlawn UMC Short term Missionary Zaire (Congo), Africa Currently employed at the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) Son of Byron and Juanita Dean Married to Lois Moreland-Dean 2 Daughters - Lea Dean and Megan Dean-Tobola.

**Please describe anything else you bring to the delegation that would contribute to enhancing the quality of the representation of the Northern Illinois Conference by the delegation?:** The drive and commitment to help our delegation represent all the people of the Northern Illinois Conference as we move forward With Christ as our Leader.

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**Darryl D. Harris**

**Voting Number (11)**

**Email:** dharris4800@yahoo.com

**Church membership:** Gorham, Chicago

**District:** Chicago Southern

**Please describe your most recent responsibilities in your local church:** Lay Leader, Trustee Committee member, Pastor-Parish Relations Committee member

**Please describe your most recent responsibilities in your district:** I taught at the Lay Academy.

**Biographical statement:** I retired seven years ago and I work part-time going into selected correctional centers to assist individuals to change their lives through education (upon release).

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**Adrian J. Hill**

**Voting Number (4)**

**Email:** adrian.hill@garrett.edu

**Church membership:** First UMC, West Dundee

**District:** Elgin

**Please describe your most recent responsibilities in your local church:** At First UMC West Dundee- and all NIC UMC churches I've attended - I have been the pastor's spouse, which carries with it a need to be visible to the congregation, engaging



in social activities both inside and outside the church. Also, I was on the Reconciling Team at First UMC West Dundee, working with fellow members as our church became Reconciling in September 2018.

**Please describe your most recent United Methodist responsibilities beyond the Northern Illinois Conference:** I attended General Conference as part of a class at Garrett Evangelical Seminary, acting briefly as a recorder for GCSRW, in 2012. I also attended General Conference as an outside lay observer in order to support the NIC delegation team as well as friends involved in Reconciling Ministries and Love Prevails, in 2016.

**Please describe your involvement in your community or other groups that would be an asset to the delegation:** I recently began working with members of the NIC Reconciling Ministries Task Force and look to be involved with more planning around General Conference 2020, as well as any future UMC.

**Biographical statement:** I was born and raised in Oak Ridge, TN and grew up in a Baptist church. I attended Vanderbilt, where I met my now wife, Pastor Carol Hill. When we were dating, I began attending the Methodist Church her mom, Pastor Katherine Paisley, led in Nashville. This was my introduction to the UMC that has been my home for 15 years and counting. We eventually moved to Alexandria, VA and began attending the UMC that Carol worked at as Youth Director - Aldersgate UMC. There, we got married and while in Alexandria, we had our first child, Katie. We soon moved to Chicago for Carol to attend seminary at Garrett Evangelical. After Carol's graduation, her first appointment was at First UMC Park Ridge. While in Park Ridge, we had our second child, Halle Grace, who sadly passed away 2 days after her birth. We also had our twins, Carrie and Adrian Jr. Katie is now 12, and the twins are now 6. Also while in Park Ridge, I attended seminary for 3 years at Garrett Evangelical myself, taking time off to be the primary caregiver to our twins as Pastor Carol continued her ministry. After our time in First UMC Park Ridge, Carol became the Senior Pastor at Epworth UMC, in the Edgewater neighborhood in Chicago, where I also served as a trustee. After 3 years there, Pastor Carol became the Senior Pastor at First UMC West Dundee. After 2 years there, Pastor Carol has now become the first female pastor at Park Ridge Community church. I am currently the Lead Custodian at Barrington UMC and have been there about a year and a half. Before that I was the janitor at both Berry UMC and Irving Park UMC in Chicago. Employment with these UMC churches came after having been laid off during the economic crisis in 2008 and I am very thankful to my current church and those before me who allowed me to help provide for my family.

**Please describe anything else you bring to the delegation that would contribute to enhancing the quality of the representation of the Northern Illinois Conference by the delegation:** As I mentioned, I did not grow up in the Methodist church, but have come to love



and respect the UMC as a once theological outsider who the UMC took in and embraced, despite our initial differences. To me, the UMC is the group of wonderful people I've met at many churches while on my own personal spiritual journey, as well as navigating "growing up" in general. As such, I do not have lifelong memories of the UMC, nor was it ever my default when it came to how church looked. I feel that gives me a unique perspective and frees me to look at what the UMC can be in the future, without holding on to any potentially harmful old ways of which we should part ways. The lesson of not putting new wine in to old wineskins has been a recurring theme for me as I reflect on the 3 General Conferences I've been involved in since 2012, particularly on issues regarding LGBTQIA persons directly. When I was in seminary at Garrett Evangelical, I had the privilege to meet many wonderful future leaders in the UMC. They were a diverse group, but I especially learned a lot from my Black women classmates and my LGBTQIA classmates about what I, as a Black man, can be doing better to ensure that the liberation I work for doesn't leave out people we claim to care about. I have had the honor and privilege of hearing stories of LGBTQIA clergy, both those who completed the ordination process and those who chose to walk away because the process did not allow them to be their full authentic selves. I feel compelled to stand with those still fighting for the UMC they love - because even before the events of GC 2019, the current state of the UMC remained untenable for our LGBTQIA clergy and members. And I also feel compelled to be a voice for those that eventually chose to move on - I have to remind the UMC of the ministries our old ways potentially cost us. Delegate or not, I must use that voice because the labor of change cannot fall solely on those less privileged than me. I must speak up and ensure those marginalized by the past and current UMC structures are not harmed by any new ones that emerge. My time as the spouse of a seminary student, my time as a seminary student myself, and my time as the spouse of a current UMC elder, has put me in contact with many brilliant persons who are passionate about the UMC and I have a wealth of resources to consult with as we consider how a new UMC looks both administratively as well spiritually.

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**Nadia R. Kanhai**

**Voting Number (10)**

**Email:** nadiakanhai@gmail.com

**Church membership:** Grace UMC, Naperville

**District:** Aurora

**Please describe your most recent responsibilities in your**

**local church:** I regularly attend Grace UMC in Naperville, where I sing in the choir, attend (occasionally lead) adult education, chair the Religion and Race team, serve as a Stephen Minister, and am part of the yoga ministry and Walk to Emmaus Reunion Group. I





raised my family at Grace and have been a member for 25+ years. I've taught Sunday School, coordinated interfaith outreach, studied the Disciple Bible series (and other Bible & book studies), participated in UMW circles, and served in various ways.

**Please describe your most recent responsibilities in your district:** At the district level, I'm the clinic coordinator for Northern Illinois Justice for Our Neighbors' Aurora site, where I have volunteered for 8 years. As coordinator, I attend NIJFON board meetings and Aurora Cluster meetings. While I'm a member of Grace-Naperville, I work with other UMCs in Aurora and Naperville.

**Please describe your most recent responsibilities on the Conference level:** I currently serve as co-chair of the Northern Illinois Conference Commission on Religion and Race and volunteer with Older Adult Ministries. In the past, I served as co-chair of the scholarship team, Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry. I participate in various conference events and spiritual formation (including Walk to Emmaus and "Freedom's Journey: The Art of Organizing for Democratic Change and the Mission of Liberation").

**Please describe your most recent United Methodist responsibilities beyond the Northern Illinois Conference:** At the jurisdictional level, I serve/d on the boards of NCJ Fellowship of Asian Americans (current) and NCJ Commission on Religion and Race (last 2 quadrenniums). At the general level, I'm a member of the Board of Church & Society's Immigration Rapid Response Team, representing NIC and NIJFON.

**Please describe your involvement in your community or other groups that would be an asset to the delegation:** My call is to serve God's Beloved Community, which is often situated outside the church walls. My involvement includes Northern Illinois Justice for Our Neighbors, West Suburban Faith-based PEACE Coalition, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Together is Better Alliance, meeting with local elected representatives, and advocating for and educating the public on immigrant rights. I volunteer with Family Focus, Indivisible Aurora, and the Aurora Freedom Coalition and regularly serve as liaison between local organizations beyond those mentioned here. My ecumenical/interfaith/ intergenerational activism/volunteerism includes issues of LGBTQIA+, food security, interfaith cooperation, access to healthcare, reproductive rights, students, and workers' rights.

**Biographical statement:** Nadia lives in Aurora where she raised her family. Locally, she works on issues of race and culture, immigration (through NIJFON and local groups) and peace and justice. A native of the West Indies, she grew up in Wisconsin as a PK, then attended North Central College in Naperville. Since then, she has lived in northern IL, where she worked as a journalist, marketing specialist, editor, and proposal writer. Nadia has been an active member of Grace UMC in Naperville for 25+ years, as well as a community volunteer in schools, political

campaigns, and social justice education and advocacy, reaching those on the margins. Volunteers in Mission (VIM) and faith & social witness travels have taken her from Kenya and India to Ferguson, MO, and Standing Rock, ND. She currently serves as NIJFON Aurora clinic coordinator and NIC Commission on Religion & Race co-chair.

**Please describe anything else you bring to the delegation that would contribute to enhancing the quality of the representation of the Northern Illinois Conference by the delegation?:** A passion to serve God's Beloved Community, intersectionality, Stephen Ministry training, community organizing and building, the written word, a history of United Methodism and working for racial justice and cultural competency within the Church are some traits I offer. I have also learned (and continue to learn) to "put legs on my prayers," by taking action for and with God's beloved community. I deeply respect those who make the sacrifice to serve and trust they bring similar qualities as well as those which aren't my strongpoints. I'm a work in progress -- broken, re-imagined, and blessed -- eager to learn from others' experience and offer my own.

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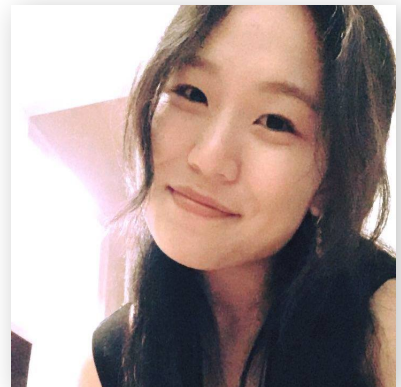
## **Jessica Jeeae Lee**

### **Voting Number (8)**

**Email:** jessica.lee@garrett.edu

**Church membership:** Glenbrook Korean, Northbrook

**District:** Chicago Northwest



### **Please describe your most recent responsibilities in your local church:**

I am currently serving as the Children and Youth Director at Glenbrook Korean United Methodist Church in Northbrook, IL. I served on the All-Site Vision Team of Urban Village Church, Chicago as well as Associate Worship Leader at Urban Village Church, Wicker Park. I co-created a monthly alternative worship service at the Chicago Temple through Urban Village. Also, I led a Mental Health Education Small Group for Urban Village. I was also an active founding member of the Inclusive Collective, a campus ministry at the University of Illinois, Chicago.

**Please describe your most recent responsibilities in your district:** I have begun engaging conversations on how the United Methodist Church in the Chicago Northwest can serve the Korean American Youth.

**Please describe your most recent responsibilities on the Conference level:** I have co-coordinated how seminarians at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary can be more involved with the Judicial Council and the Council of Bishops.

**Please describe your most recent United Methodist responsibilities beyond the Northern Illinois Conference:** Through my network of both Korean United Methodist lay and clergy within the Northern Illinois Conference and beyond, I have been able to continue discussions across conferences with folks at all levels of leadership.

**Please describe your involvement in your community or other groups that would be an asset to the delegation:** I am a graduating Master of Theological Studies student at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. I will be continuing to pursue my academic career through doctoral work at the same institution beginning this fall. My area of study is Christian History and Historical Theology with a special emphasis on philosophy and ethics. I believe my work in integrating tradition with liberative theology for the Church today can be a valuable asset in how we continue to grow the Church in a way that is true to its roots but also continues to navigate contemporary contexts.

**Biographical statement:** I am Korean-American, born and raised in the Northern Virginia area just outside of Washington DC. I grew up attending Korean United Methodist Church of Greater Washington. I also lived abroad for several years in Hanoi, Vietnam, Beijing, China, and also have roots in Seoul, South Korea. My college years spanned studying areas in both science, mathematics, and psychology, eventually graduating with a philosophy degree. My family has lived all over the world but one consistent element has always been church planting. Both of my parents have fostered the planting and growth of ministries supporting Korean International Students (globally) and have been large influences in my vision of Church growth. My family was converted to the Methodist tradition 5 generations ago. My roots in the United Methodist Church have defined a large part of who I am and continue to do so.

**Please describe anything else you bring to the delegation that would contribute to enhancing the quality of the representation of the Northern Illinois Conference by the delegation?:** I believe both my ministerial experience through creative worship and service as well as my philosophical academics toward theological understandings that are both rooted in the tradition of the Church yet relevant to contemporary contexts can be valuable to the representation. Furthermore, I believe as a young Korean-American woman who has lived abroad significantly and engaged in a variety of cultures, languages, and contexts, allows for another lens that can be vital for a fuller representation of who the people in the Northern Illinois Conference include.

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**Ronnie Lyall**

**Voting Number (3)**

**Email:** ronitdl94@gmail.com

**Church membership:** Broadway UMC, Chicago

**District:** Chicago Northwest



**Please describe your most recent responsibilities in your**

**local church:** Led Sunday School - Taught Sunday School - Taught VBS - Part of traveling VBS team - Liturgist - Sing in the choir - Lead worship - Provide special music

**Please describe your most recent responsibilities on the**

**Conference level:** Volunteer at Annual Conference - Attended Plumblin mission trip - Attended Appalachian Service Project mission trip 3 times - Member of local church - Sing in choir

**Please describe your most recent United Methodist responsibilities beyond the Northern**

**Illinois Conference:** Attended Gather at the River Convocation - Member of Reconciling Ministries Network - Methodist Federation for Social Action - United Methodists Of Color - United Methodist Alliance for Transgender Inclusion

**Please describe your involvement in your community or other groups that would be an**

**asset to the delegation:** Volunteer at PADS - Youth group - President of United Methodist Student Organization (now called United) at North Central College

**Biographical statement:** I have been a part of United Methodist Church since I was born and have been active to various degrees throughout my childhood and adolescence. However, in high school I began to be more active, joining the bell choir and eventually the choir, and also participating in youth group and Sunday School. I also participated in church directed plays and musicals. At this time I also began to teach summer Sunday School and volunteered to help in VBS. In college I was asked to lead the United Methodist Student Organization at North Central College. Under my leadership we voted to make the organization Reconciling so that LGBT+ students on campus would feel comfortable taking part in our weekly meetings. We changed to the name of the organization to United so that students that wanted a religious affiliation but were not sure what religion they identified with could come and get the religious fulfillment they needed.

**Please describe anything else you bring to the delegation that would contribute to**

**enhancing the quality of the representation of the Northern Illinois Conference by the delegation?:** I am unapologetically passionate about LGBT+ rights in the church and want to do my part to assist in any way that I can. I am an articulate and persuasive speaker and I will

use all of my skills to make sure that our LGBT+ siblings in Christ are fully welcomed. As a young adult I would also like to offer my insight as to how the church could be more relevant for my and future generations. I would also like to offer my insights on the Church's action on social issues.

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## **Mark Manzi**

### **Voting Number (7)**

**Email:** mmanzi@sbcglobal.net

**Church membership:** St. Andrew UMC, Carol Stream

**District:** Aurora

**Please describe your most recent responsibilities in your local church:** Chair Church Council, Chair Annual Corn Fest Committee, Sunday school teacher, active participant in Third Monday Dinner ministry



**Please describe your most recent responsibilities in your district:** Member of Aurora District Board of Ordained Ministry - 2010 - 2016

**Please describe your most recent responsibilities on the Conference level:** Co-Conference Lay Leader, Co-Chair conference Board of Laity, member of Annual Conference Shepherding Team, member of Annual Conference Committee

**Please describe your most recent United Methodist responsibilities beyond the Northern Illinois Conference:** Lay participant from NIC at Council of Bishops Extended Cabinet Summit - 2016 been able to continue discussions across conferences with folks at all levels of leadership.

**Please describe your involvement in your community or other groups that would be an asset to the delegation:** Volunteer at Northern Illinois Food Bank in Geneva

**Biographical statement:** I am a life long United Methodist having grown up in the Richard Street United Methodist Church in Joliet. I graduated from North Central College with a teaching degree and moved to Carol Stream in August of 1975 to begin my first teaching job at Jay Stream Jr. High as an eighth-grade science teacher. I retired from being a middle school principal at Herrick Middle School in Downers Grove in 2009. I have been married to my wife Shirley for 38 years. We live in West Chicago and attend St. Andrew UMC in Carol Stream. My wife and I enjoy traveling and working in our yard. I also like to play golf. Being an active member of St. Andrew UMC as well as working in the church on the district and conference levels fills much of my free time. St. Andrew is a small/medium sized church, and very active

both within and with our outreach. We are a reconciling church as well as an immigrant welcoming church. At St. Andrew, I am active on a leadership level with the church council and with our Third Monday Dinner ministry. I also teach adult Sunday school and attend a Wednesday morning Bible study. I have been a lay servant for over 20 years.

**Please describe anything else you bring to the delegation that would contribute to enhancing the quality of the representation of the Northern Illinois Conference by the delegation?:** Through my work in the local church, Aurora District, and the NIC, I have gained an appreciation and understanding of the great diversity of our conference that gives us wonderful ability and opportunity to share the love of Christ with all of the neighbors in our many different communities. I know we have differences of opinion on a number of issues, but I truly believe that we all want to follow the way of Jesus and make God's Kingdom a reality here on earth. I would call myself a progressive United Methodist and see the Bible as a living book that is the inspired word of God. I know that Jesus welcomed everyone to follow him and I believe that as followers of Jesus everyone must be welcome in our church. I know that the love and grace of God keep me going in a changing world and that working together is better than working alone. I believe we can accomplish so much more for a hurting world by listening to each other and calmly working together than by retreating into our silos, hearing and doing only what we want to hear and do.

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### **Nancy Pendergrass**

#### **Voting Number (5)**

**Email:** pendergrass2016@yahoo.com

**Church membership:** First UMC, Evanston

**District:** Chicago Northwestern

#### **Please describe your most recent responsibilities in your**

**local church:** Lay Member to Annual Conference, Finance Committee, First Hands (a service group), ASP adult leader, youth and adult education regarding General Conference, offering counter, Welcome Spot volunteer



**Please describe your most recent responsibilities on the Conference level:** General Conference delegation (reserve delegate to Jurisdictional Conference in 2016, reserve delegate to General Conference in 2019), Annual Conference Shepherding Team, Nominations Committee (chair), Conference Committee on Finance and Administration (recent past)

**Please describe your involvement in your community or other groups that would be an asset to the delegation:** nothing current



**Biographical statement:** I am a lifelong United Methodist with United Methodist family members in Alabama. I have a cousin who has been with her partner, now wife, for 43 years, and they have raised two girls. I have witnessed the family remaining in relationship with them while their attitudes toward celebrating their relationship evolved. Because as an adult my family of origin has been long distance, my church has become my local family. I received my MBA from DePaul University and my BS in Industrial Engineering from Northwestern University (go 'Cats!). I have worked for both for-profit and not-for-profit entities

**Please describe anything else you bring to the delegation that would contribute to enhancing the quality of the representation of the Northern Illinois Conference by the delegation:** I attended General Conferences in 2000, 2004, 2008, and 2012, as a volunteer advocate for full inclusion. For each of these I attended the first week because I have a strong interest in the detail of the legislative process. I believe my experience and understanding of the process will aid the delegation in working efficiently and effectively. It also frees up time to work collaboratively with those outside Northern Illinois, taking advantage of relationship established over the quadrennia.

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**Rita L. Smith**

**Voting Number (1)**

**Email:** RitaLS1430@aol.com

**Church membership:** Resurrection UMC, Chicago

**District:** Chicago Northwestern

**Please describe your most recent responsibilities in your**

**local church:** Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee,  
Chairman Certified Lay Servant Childrens Message Speaker  
Liturgist Upper Room Prayer Ministry Lay Member to Annual  
Conference

**Please describe your most recent responsibilities in your**

**district:** Lay Academy Teacher, Spring 2018

**Please describe your most recent responsibilities on the Conference level:** Episcopacy

Committee, Secretary Church and Society Member Disciple Bible Outreach Ministry Board  
Member 2012 General Conference, First Reserve 2016 General Conference Delegate, Second  
Reserve



**Please describe your most recent United Methodist responsibilities beyond the Northern Illinois Conference:** North Central Jurisdiction United Methodist Women, 2016-2020, President  
General Conference Interjurisdictional Episcopal Committee 2016 UMW Assembly 2018,  
Presenter UMW Human Trafficking Task Force Member, 2009-present

**Please describe your involvement in your community or other groups that would be an asset to the delegation:** Illinois Church Women United Board of Directors Selah Freedom  
Board of Directors Chicago Park District, LaFollete Park Advisory Council Delta Sigma Theta  
Sorority, Inc. Midwest Chaplains Council Northern Illinois Black Methodists for Church Renewal,  
Inc. Life Member

**Biographical statement:** I was born and raised in New York City (Harlem), graduating from Roosevelt High School in the Bronx. I've earned degrees from Tuskegee University and the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, and certification from Northeastern University. I am a retired Chicago Public Schools Assistant Principal, Counselor, Teacher and Coach. As a counselor, I was featured on a television show, One School, One Church. As the conference president of the United Methodist Women 2011-2013, I spearheaded our first youth retreat and legislative event, Lobby Day, at the States Capitol. I also volunteer at Selah Freedoms Drop-In Center for human trafficked youth and young adults, and participate with community and ecumenical organizations. When I am not doing all the above, I enjoy spending time with my husband of 47 years and my two adult children and their families as I go through the grieving process, as a result of the death of our other son in August 2018. My hobbies include photography and traveling.

**Please describe anything else you bring to the delegation that would contribute to enhancing the quality of the representation of the Northern Illinois Conference by the delegation?:** The skills and talents I bring to the delegation are decision making, listening, multi-tasking, leading, and following. These assets are vital for a working team when representing this conference. In addition, my current and past experiences on numerous committees, boards and organizations afforded me the opportunity to work in different capacities with a diverse group of individuals transforming lives. I put faith into action and engage others to do likewise. As a team player, I am committed to serving from the heart, and that has been demonstrated with my stick-to-it-ness as a 2016 GC Delegate.

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