



March 30, 2023

From the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors of the Rocky Mountain Conference having received the recommendation of the Intentional Interim Search Committee is pleased to announce the appointment of Rev Dr Doug Wooten as our Intentional Interim Conference Minister beginning June 1, 2023.

Rev. Dr. Douglas A. Wooten has a passion for loving God and His people. This passion is inclusive of the love he has for his family, the church, and all of humanity. Rev. Wooten’s personal mission is to share God’s Word, and to adhere to God’s calling through the Holy Spirit in ministry. This is critical especially during these changing times in our world today. He believes that God has placed within him a spirit of renewal, encouragement, and fortitude to help God’s people as they continue on their long, meandering journey. It is with this passion, and formulated prayer through God’s Holy Spirit, that he will enable the spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to every corner of this world. This includes every person, regardless of race, age, color, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, and socioeconomic status.



In his 25 years of ministerial experience, Rev. Wooten has served numerous congregations in North Carolina, Hawai’i and Indiana. He has served the wider church community of the United Church of Christ as a board member of many different associations and conferences. In addition, he has served as a member of the Executive Committee now known as the United Church Board, and is currently serving as a member of the UCC Manual on Church committee. Rev. Wooten is an ordained minister with standing in the United Church of Christ. His formal education includes degrees from Shaw University (BA), Shaw Divinity (MDiv), and Chicago Theological Seminary (DMin). His Doctoral dissertation was entitled “Finding God in the Midst of Division”.

Rev. Wooten has been happily married to Yulanda Tisdale Wooten for 35 years and together they have two adult sons, Douglas Jr. and Adam. Both sons reside in North Carolina.

Conference Events and News

Safety Concerns for Churches

Throughout the United Church of Christ, we are hearing reports of safety and security threats to churches due to the increase in hate attacks against faith communities, especially those who practice extravagant welcome in their local communities. We encourage churches who have either received threats or Facebook attacks or are worried about the safety and security to reach out to [Diane Weible](#) so she can offer support and resources. General resources are also available from FEMA for faith communities and can be accessed [HERE](#).

From the Conference Wide Committee on Ministry

Ecclesiastical Council



Terri Bowen was granted an overwhelming endorsement for ordination, pending a call, at a hybrid Ecclesiastical Council held in person at Parkhill UCC and via Zoom on March 29, 2023. Terri earned her M. Div. in May 2020, with a distinguished award for her preaching talent, and was called as Minister for Congregational Care. Before being called to ministry she spent 26 years in the legal field working at the Adams County Judicial Center.

From La Foret

OWL Training

Come to La Foret for an Elementary OWL facilitator training! Our Whole Lives: Sexuality and Our Faith (OWL) facilitator training prepares people to implement one of the most highly regarded comprehensive sexuality education programs in the country! This training will prepare participants to facilitate the Elementary levels of the curriculum, K-1 and 4-6 grades. April 21 at 4pm to April 23 at 2pm. Register at this [link](#) ASAP!
Contact [Candace Woods](#) with any questions.

From the National Setting



Blessings to each of you,

I am writing with an urgent request.

I know it comes as no surprise to you that we are living in a perilous time for LGBTQ persons across the nation. Some churches and synagogues are being attacked and vandalized for their efforts to hold safe space for LGTBQ adults and youth.

And since the current legislative session began less than three months ago, the Human Rights Campaign is already tracking 340 anti-LGBTQ+ bills that have been introduced in statehouses across the country. 150 of those would specifically restrict the rights of transgender people, the highest number of bills targeting transgender people in a single year to date.

Strategizing responses, that go beyond reaction and counter-action, will take time, but it will be one of the many issues we will continue to give attention to in coming days.

It also occurs to us as disheartening as this is for us, it is disheartening and frightening for LGBTQ families in ways that cannot be compared, and our trans youth, are under an aggressive attack that is rapidly gaining steam.

The request:

March 31st is National Trans-visibility Day and we would like to take the day to shower trans-youth with messages of love, reminding them:

They are not alone.

We won't stop fighting for their rights until they have them.

We will not let hate win.

There are more of us supporting them than those who stand against them.

God loves them and so do we.

I am inviting you to write a love note to trans youth (200 words or less) expressing your support, and invite your churches to do the same. Although notes can continue to come in after March 31st, we need a minimum of 48 love notes to ensure we can post at least one love note every 30 minutes for the entire day. The notes will have prominent placement on our landing page and our social media accounts will direct people there. If your conferences would like to do the same, the more the merrier.

Notes should be emailed to: Lettersoflove@ucc.org by March 31st.

Thank you for your consideration. I know it's a late ask but the logistics took time. "What the world needs now is love, sweet love."T

Rev. Traci D. Blackmon

Associate General Minister

Justice & Local Church Ministries

United Church of Christ



The officers and national staff of the United Church of Christ mourn with those who lament the needless deaths of Evelyn Dieckhaus, Hallie Scruggs, William Kinney, Cynthia Peak, Katherine Koonce, and Mike Hill, violently killed at The Covenant School in Nashville, TN.

We grieve for and with the families and friends of those who will never come home again. We lament the tortured thoughts and death of one who lost their way to love of themselves and others. We decry our complicity with providing legal and easy access to weapons no one needs. And we grieve a Congress that lacks the conviction to place the safety of our children and adult citizens above political aspirations.

We are in the third month of the new year and 10,114 persons have died from gun violence in the United States since this year began. There have been 130 mass shootings, and 413 children have been victims of gun violence this year. We join our prayers with those ascending in this moment for these families, and those that ascended for the victims of every mass shooting from Columbine to Nashville. And we will continue to urge Congress and communities toward reasonable gun legislation, an already available response to our impassioned plea.

Upcoming Events and Important Links

April 22: Earth Day

April 27: RMC Board of Directors Meeting

May 2, 9, 16 and 23 : Daring Greatly Book study Zoom link

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/3296187641?pwd=MU4yRGpMb3pEQ0MwbFFrUVFzalppZz09>

June 15-17: Annual Celebration [Learn more.](#) [Register.](#)

Previous versions of the Together Newsletter can be found [here](#).