





From the National Setting

Karen Georgia Thompson becomes first woman to lead UCC in historic vote



The General Synod of the United Church of Christ made history Monday, July 3, when it elected the Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson as the first woman, and the first Black woman, to lead the denomination as General Minister and President.

Rev. Thompson is the third woman nominated for the post, after the Revs. Yvonne Delk (in 1989) and Barbara Brown Zikmund (in 1999), but the first to be elected. A Jamaican immigrant, Thompson is the third person of African descent to serve as leader of the denomination.

“Today, United Church of Christ, we created a first together,” she said after the vote. “It won’t be the last first.” She thanked Delk and Brown Zikmund, stating that they “kicked in the doors,” paving the way for her election.

“As I stand here before you as your newly and duly elected General Minister and President, I stand here as a Jamaican immigrant woman, a mother and a grandmother, a sister and a friend to many,” Thompson said. “... The enormity of this moment will be with me for many years to come.”

Her election took place at the UCC’s 34th General Synod in Indianapolis, with 626 delegates voting for her election, 43 against and seven abstaining. She will start her new role Aug. 1, taking over from the Rev. John Dorhauer, who has served for the past eight years.

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