



Global Ministries to commission EarthKeepers for environmental stewardship
57 new Global Ministries EarthKeepers will launch creation care projects in the U.S.

October 16, 2023

ATLANTA - Global Ministries will commission 57 new EarthKeepers in an online service on Tuesday, Nov. 14 at 8 p.m. ET. This service will affirm the EarthKeepers in their call to the ministry of creation care and bless their work in their communities. The service will be livestreamed at www.facebook.com/GlobalMinistries.

Global Ministries EarthKeepers is a training program to equip United Methodists in the United States for environmental stewardship. Participants discuss theology, United Methodist resources, community organizing and anti-racism, and then use what they learn to develop an environmental project for their churches and communities. The program is both a launchpad for people looking to turn an idea into action and an incubator for people who want to deepen an existing ministry. Participants develop plans in conversation with their peers, troubleshooting ideas and sharing strategies.

The fall training marked the return to in-person training following the COVID-19 pandemic and took place in Birmingham, Alabama; Denver, Colorado; and Hartford, Connecticut. The spring training took place online.

This year's EarthKeepers represent 23 annual conferences and all five jurisdictions. The group includes clergy, laity, a mission advocate, and agency and conference staff.

"In a year of epic heat, storms, fires, floods and droughts, the work of Global Ministries EarthKeepers is crucial," said Roland Fernandes, general secretary of Global Ministries and UMCOR. "The world needs faithful leaders in every community to take action to harness climate change and interrupt environmental degradation. Global Ministries is proud to support these United Methodists as they answer God's call to care for creation."

"The urgency of the environmental crisis is clear," said the Rev. Jenny Phillips, director of Environmental Sustainability. "These EarthKeepers are leading the way in grassroots, community-based responses through projects focusing on energy, food production, water management, plastic reduction, textile waste and more. Their ministries will have wide-reaching impact in their churches and communities."

This is the seventh year that the EarthKeepers commissioning service has been held online. The online service allows EarthKeepers to participate along with their family, friends and church community. The service will be led by Bishop Thomas Bickerton, resident bishop of the New York Conference in the Northeastern Jurisdiction, president of the UMCOR board and president of the Council of Bishops of The United Methodist Church.

Headshots of the participants are available for annual conference communications use at: <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjAu7BL>.

To read more about their projects and to get updates on 2024 trainings, join the Global Ministries Creation Care Network at <http://creationcare.umcmmission.org/signup>.



The 2023 Global Ministries EarthKeepers reside in the following conferences:

Alabama-West Florida
Dr. Cheryl Stevenson

Arkansas
Elizabeth McCormick

Baltimore-Washington
Jennifer Martin-Johnson

East Ohio
Melanie Smith

Eastern Pennsylvania
Dr. Deborah Appler
Kathy Snaveley

Holston
Jan Berry
Rev. Clair Sauer

Indiana
Rev. Amber Good

Missouri
Susan March

Mountain Sky
Todd Allen
Ann Heard
Pamela Lee
Dr. Clyde Oakley
Ingrid Wood

New England
Charles Beltz
Rev. Kathleen Decker
Grace Hubbard
Rev. Bumshik Min
Bonnie-jean Rowe
Sharon Saunders

New York
Rev. Egan Bovell
Pedro Chavez
Debbie Dunn
Rev. Michael Jenkins

Rev. Ralph Merante
Rev. Wendy Paige
Janette Riverson
Rev. Frank Sarpong
Amy Sheets-Chavez

North Alabama
Rev. Megan Barber
Rev. Abigail Carlisle-Wilke
Rev. Jenny You

North Carolina
Rev. Jarrod Davis

North Georgia
Jay Horton
Rev. Brent Huckaby
Rev. Dr. Jordan Thrasher

Oklahoma
Dr. Mark Davies

Pacific Northwest
Sophie Agtarap
Kathy Hogg
Maureen Miller
Rev. Paul Mitchell
Ann Reinhart
Rev. Sandy Ward

Peninsula-Delaware
RuthAnn Purchase

Rio Texas
Dawn Lewis
Donna Clark
Rev. Rebecca Hamann
Dr. Todd Phillips

Susquehanna
Rev. Judy Young

Upper New York
Rev. Corey Turnpenny

**Western North Carolina**

Chele Mills
Dr. Joe Donoghue
Rev. James Webb

Virginia

Benjamin Blevins
Rev. Gary Heaton

Wisconsin

Katharine Goray

Photos are available at: <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjAu7BL>

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About the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church

Global Ministries is the worldwide mission and development agency of The United Methodist Church. Founded in 1819, Global Ministries today supports more than 200 missionaries in over 60 countries, including the United States. It has personnel, projects, and partners in 110 countries. Learn more about Global Ministries by visiting www.umcmmission.org or by following www.facebook.com/GlobalMinistries and www.twitter.com/UMCmission.

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