

Delores "Dee" J. Williamston

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Delegate # 2037

What has been your involvement in The United Methodist Church (include district, conference, and general agency/board involvement)?

Great Plains (GP): Salina-Hays District Superintendent 2014 to present, Connecting Council, Board of Trustees Kansas Wesleyan University 2014 to present, GP Board of Ordained Ministry 2014 to present, Salina-Hays District boards & committees, GP Forward in Unity Team, Council of Bishops Christian Communities Together Ecumenical Concerns 2018.

Kansas East Conference: (KEC) Board of Ordained Ministry 2012-2013, BOM Task Force 2013, Worship team 2009, Sessions & Rules Worship 2011 & 2012, Diversity Task Force 2010-2013, Conference Episcopacy Committee 2012-2013, Chair of Parsons District Committee on Ordained Ministry 2012-2014; Organized Parsons District Clergy Women 2012-2014. Topeka District; 1998-2002 Topeka District Council on Ministry.

Why would you like to be considered for election as a delegate?

I want to be involved in the intricate process of making a difference in the life of UM denomination locally, regionally and globally. I am faithful, committed and passionate about the Lord, the church and the deep diversity that resides in the UMC. I have a depth of various experiences and perspectives from my life encounters. I'd bring a deep sense of diversity in all areas I participate. To be considered I bring a thoughtful, hopeful, steady and reliable attitude to the table to articulate multiple narratives and voices yet to be heard. It would be an honor to serve GP annual conference in this capacity.

What unique skills, knowledge, and /or gifts would you bring to the delegation?

My unique skills and knowledge are influenced from serving 22 years in the Army National Guard. I'd bring to the delegation a lived readiness and effectiveness daily in life and ministry. I bring innate gifts of adaptive leadership, perseverance through adversity, listening, observing and the gift of compassion. I'd bring gumption from traversing through mind-bending circumstances and humility as a continuous life-long learner. I'd bring a warrior's spirit and gifts of inspiration, proclamation, administration and deep faith to the delegation. I'd bring the witness of the 'good news' of Jesus Christ and God's all-transforming power to the table.

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In light of the 2019 special session of General Conference, how do you believe the church is called to move forward in fulfilling its mission?

There are challenging times ahead for the United Methodist Church, however, the UMC is called to move forward and transform lives, communities, nations and the world. I believe the Church can reclaim the power of Pentecost so that the mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ is the main mission and focus. The Church can achieve this by having the courage of its convictions knowing that there is nothing impossible for God. With renewed emphasis I believe the UMC can continue to preach good news, healing, hope, sight and liberation for the oppressed, and express God's love and mercy in the world. In the words of John Wesley, "The best of all is God is with us." Even in times such as these God is with us as we march forward as Christ disciples into the future.

What do you believe are the challenges and opportunities facing The United Methodist Church today?

The challenges facing the UMC today are multiple with declining membership, fewer professions of faith, smaller rural churches, less clergy along with long standing debates of human sexuality, race, status and gender equality. I believe the challenge for the Church, especially after General Conference 2019, is to continue to provide hope, healing and grace to all.

The Church has the opportunity for creativity in ministry and becoming a catalyst for change. I believe time spent revisiting the Methodist movement can bring revival to the UMC. I believe intentionally spending time equipping, empowering and resourcing laity is important as the Church moves forward into an unknown but known future. I believe the Church offers the best opportunity to serve in the world as a disciple of Jesus Christ with a transforming message. I believe the challenges and opportunities for the UMC are to take a leap of faith and truly minister and accept all people no matter what their situation in this life is.