

Junius Dotson

Address: 818 19th Ave. S. #1231
Nashville, TN

Church: Discipleship Ministries

District: NA

Email: jbdotson@umcdiscipleship.org

Gender: Male

Ethnicity:
African-American

Age range: 45-55

Phone: 316-204-9354



Delegate # **2011**

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

Local: Senior Pastor of Saint Mark Wichita, Kansas ('02-'16). Launched SE campus (2013) District/Conference: Board of Ordained Ministry, Revitalization Taskforce of the Kansas West Conference; Wichita East District New Church Start Team.

Agency/Board: Speaker/Teacher in 31 Annual Conferences. Facilitator for the Fitzgerald Program, a Discipleship Ministries program to equip new church start. Board of Directors of Discipleship Ministries; chair of the New Church Starts/Path1 ('09-12). Reserve Delegate for General Conference (2012, 1st Reserve 2016). General Secretary/CEO for Discipleship Ministries since July 1, 2016.

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

I am passionate about discipleship and the future of our church. I want to give voice to the major concerns we face as a denomination and give voice to those who are "yet to come." I want to be at the table when significant decisions are made regarding the missional priorities of the church. I want to join others to help shape and share a vision that is relentlessly focused on making disciples. I want the ability to speak directly to issues that affect the viability of our denomination and I promise to bring my whole heart to this effort.

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

I bring passion, a sense of purpose, and determination to help our church see all the people that God is calling us to reach. As General Secretary, I have a unique view of the whole church and can bring a wealth of knowledge about the connection to the table. I can share first-hand what I've learned as I travel across the denomination teaching, serving and listening to others share their concerns and aspirations for our church. I also bring a voice of diversity that is desperately needed in our delegation meetings.

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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?

In spite of the decisions made in St. Louis, the debate on human sexuality will continue. I believe part of our task as leaders in this church is to keep working to fully live into the Wesleyan understanding of what it means to be perfected in love in community with one another. That is why my African American mothers and fathers, who were sacrificed on the altar of unity and placed in a segregated jurisdiction, stayed at table, in the room, because they believed in this ideal. I stay at the table, not for unity for unity's sake but because I earnestly believe that "we can be one in Christ, one with each other and one in ministry to all the world until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at his heavenly banquet." Let's stay at the table.

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

What does it mean to be a global church? The challenges and the opportunities are the same. We are not of one mind about a whole host of issues. But, I believe it is a false choice that says we have to be. We don't have to compromise convictions in order to be compassionate. We don't have to see eye to eye in order to walk hand in hand. We do not have to be "of one mind" on every issue in order to maintain our fundamental commitment to making disciples of Jesus Christ and being in mission to proclaim good news to the poor; to proclaim freedom for the prisoners; and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. I would argue that if we grow our adaptive capacity in this understanding, we will have the creative imagination to handle issues of vitality, church growth, etc.