

Dan Entwistle

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Delegate # **110**

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

I have served on staff at the Church of the Resurrection in various roles over the past 27 years, as the church has grown from 120 to more than 23,000 people. I currently serve as the church's senior executive director, with duties that include supervising the executive team and overseeing the church's management, ministries and operations.

At the annual conference and district levels, I have served on a variety of committees and task forces. I have coached churches and led training workshops for pastors and lay leaders. For the past 15 years, I have attended Annual Conference as a lay member/alternate.

At the General Church level, I served as a Trustee for the Foundation for Evangelism for 10 years before serving eight years on the board of directors for the General Board of Discipleship in Nashville, Tennessee. I attended General Conference as an observer in 2008, 2012, 2016 and 2019. This year, I am submitting my name for the first time for consideration as a delegate to General Conference.

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

I would be honored to serve as a Great Plains delegate to help shape the future of the United Methodist Church during this time of challenge and opportunity. I have great hopes for a bright future for Methodism because I believe our convictions and theological approach will play an important role in reaching future generations if we strengthen our focus on making new disciples who will lead the church into its future.

I have spent much of my life connecting with pastors and lay leaders across the U.S. Jurisdictions and Central Conferences to strengthen local churches and equip leaders to serve in their contexts. I recognize that the legislative work that happens at General and Jurisdictional Conferences will never alone be fully adequate to address the challenges our denomination faces. However, in this time of transition and adaptation, I am eager to be engaged in the process of helping our churches navigate toward a bright, hopeful, future.

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

The current turmoil across our denomination has turned up the heat — not just with regards to the full inclusion of LGBTQ persons, but also regarding the stability of our global structure, the roles of bishops, boards and agencies, the function of the Book of Discipline, and the latitude for Christians to faithfully interpret and apply the scriptures in modern times. I believe the turmoil we face today will, in hindsight, be seen as the growth pains of transformation and growth. This could be a moment of opportunity that we should not squander, and I am committed to striving for a bright future for the UMC.

I have years of involvement with pastors, bishops, and lay leaders across the church, which will hopefully be an

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asset as our delegation works behind-the-scenes and publicly from the floor of General Conference. Additionally, I bring an understanding of how the actions of General Conference could impact our denomination's legacy resources. My personal strengths tend toward strategy, alignment, collaboration and execution. And I have written, consulted and led workshops on strategic planning, church governance, managing staff teams, equipping volunteers, multi-campus strategy, leading change, and managing conflict.

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?

I am committed to helping our churches love and welcome everyone as we make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. This will require revisiting and substantially revising the structural plans that were set aside during the specially-called General Conference in 2019 and finding an acceptable model that can gain the support of the majority of delegates in Minneapolis in 2020.

It is imperative that General Conference find a way forward that embodies love and allows room for people with varying theological viewpoints. As a matter of faith, we cannot give into the instincts of narrowly excluding those with whom we disagree. We must push to help our global church re-imagine what will be required as global policy and what can be left for pastors and local churches to discern. In the midst of these challenges, we must remember to be generous toward each another, respectful of those who see the world differently, and united in our mission to reach and involve all persons in the ministry of the local church.

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

In one form or another, Methodism will have a bright future. We have a clear and powerful mission, "to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." We have leaders and resources in communities all across the globe. Yet we find it challenging to adapt our systems and structure, and we have been unable or unwilling to transform, take new risks, abandon legacy structures and refresh our approach to the achieving our mission. Underneath that, we sometimes face the foundational challenge of remembering who we are and why our churches exist. Today, we face the current opportunity to build upon the richness of our Wesleyan heritage-- a spiritual movement that awakens souls, quickly connects new people into disciple-making communities, addresses social injustices, and cares for those in need. In this moment, we must remember our mission and re-prioritize the disciple-making ministry of the local church. And we must act with urgency as we begin to reshape Methodism so that it will be vital long into the future.