

Revision Committee Begins Work on New Version of The United Methodist Hymnal

NASHVILLE, Tenn. Sept. 21, 2017 /Discipleship Ministries/ — Work on a groundbreaking revision of *The United Methodist Hymnal*, designed to be a print/digital contextually adaptable resource for primary use in the United States, begins this fall following the selection of the full Hymnal Revision Committee.

The process for Discipleship Ministries, The United Methodist Publishing House (UMPH), the Council of Bishops, and the Association of United Methodist Theological Schools to select the 15 committee members began in late 2016 and continued through the spring of 2017.

“Revising our church hymnal, especially by adding the songs and prayers that define worship for United Methodists of all ethnic and cultural backgrounds, will help our congregations expand relationship-building and discipleship-making into their communities,” said the Rev. Junius B. Dotson, General Secretary (CEO) of Discipleship Ministries, which shares responsibility for the denomination’s hymnal with The United Methodist Publishing House (UMPH).

“We are honored to have the members of this diverse committee working to develop a version of our hymnal that can grow and expand with our church,” Dotson said.

Brian Milford, President and Publisher at UMPH, said the revised hymnal will be significantly different from the traditional printed hymnal, with a much deeper and broader scope of material and delivery methods that utilize current and future technology.

“The current hymnal, published in 1989, includes four major sections with a limited number of hymns, songs, acts of worship, services, and prayers,” Milford said. “The 2020 UM hymnal will potentially contain thousands of items in these same categories, gleaned from previously published resources such as the 1989 hymnal, *Mil Voces Para Celebrar*, *Songs of Zion*, *The Faith We Sing*, *Zion Still Sings*, *Worship & Song*, and many other collections.”

The Hymnal Revision Committee will select from these resources and from other published works of contemporary music and text literature, new and existing hymns, songs and prayers submitted for consideration, and might commission additional works, Milford said.

New delivery methods will make it possible to include the many additional resources. Rather than one print version of the hymnal that is the same for all churches, each United Methodist congregation will be able to have a customized print version, if that is the delivery method they prefer, Milford said.

A core of material, which will be present in every print version of the hymnal, can be augmented with selections from a Hymnal Revision Committee-selected and General Conference-approved supplemental body of work.

The Hymnal Revision Committee embodies the identity of today’s church and the church of the future. Other

constituencies not represented on the committee will be sought and highly valued as consultants in the revision process. The committee members are:

Neil M. Alexander, President and Publisher Emeritus of UMPH, Nashville

Rev. Karen Chraska, Associate Pastor of Worship and Music at Trietsch Memorial UMC, Flower Mound, Texas

Rev. Nelson Cowan, Provisional Elder in the Florida Annual Conference and a doctoral student in liturgical studies at the Boston University School of Theology, North Andover, Mass.

Rev. Melissa Drake, Field Outreach Minister in the Iowa Annual Conference, Atlantic, Iowa

Lim Swee Hong, Ph.D., Professor of Sacred Music at Emmanuel College of Victoria University in the University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada, and member of Hewitt First UMC, Hewitt, Texas

Louisa Locklear, Music Director at Pembroke First UMC and public school music teacher, Pembroke, N.C.

Monya Logan, Minister of Worship and the Arts at St. Luke “Community” UMC, Dallas

Rev. Geoffrey Moore, President of The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada, and an elder on the North Texas Conference staff

Rev. Lydia Muñoz, Lead Pastor at Church of the Open Door, Kennett Square, Pa.

Diana Sanchez-Bushong, D.M.A., Director of Music and Worship at Westlake UMC, Austin, Texas

Rev. Theon Johnson III, Associate Pastor, Glide Memorial United Methodist Church, San Francisco

Beverly McAlilly, Director of Music Ministries and Organist, First UMC, Tupelo, Miss.

Mark Miller, Associate Professor of Church Music and Composer in Residence at Drew University, Madison, N.J.

Rev. Anna Moon, Pastor at TroyHope Ministry (English Ministry) at Korean UMC, Troy, Mich.

Rev. Dr. Karen Westerfield Tucker, Professor of Worship at Boston University, Boston

For more detailed biographical information on each committee member, go to

<http://umcdiscipleship.org/resources/2017-2020-hymnal-revision-committee-biographies>

The mission of Discipleship Ministries is to support annual conference and local church leaders for their task of equipping world-changing disciples. An agency of The United Methodist Church, Discipleship Ministries is located at 1908 Grand Ave. in Nashville, Tenn. For more information, visit www.UMCdiscipleship.org, the Press Center at www.UMCdiscipleship.org/about/press-center or call the Communications Office at (877) 899-2780, Ext. 1726.

The United Methodist Publishing House is a publisher and distributor to Christian clergy and laity, with primary responsibilities for the publishing and distribution for The United Methodist Church. The Publishing House is a fully self-supporting agency and receives no general church funds.

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