

LIVING WATER ASSOCIATION OHIO NORTHEAST, UCC

Biographical Information for 2022 Nominees

Bobby Burt was born and raised in Massillon, Ohio, where he grew up attending Myers UCC. He obtained a degree in French Literature and Culture from Ohio University in 2012. At OU, Bobby found his passion for social justice through work with his honors fraternity and the University Program Council. Since his time at OU, Bobby has held a variety of positions, including Bass Soloist for a summer music festival in Siena, Italy, training and development for several large restaurant companies, and co-directing the Music, Mime Art, Drama, and Dance Camp for the Heartland Conference. In 2021, he graduated with a Masters in Christian Leadership from University of Dubuque Theological Seminary and is currently the Associate Minister for Young Adults and Families with Children at First Congregational Church of Akron

Rev. Randall Gehres prepared for ministry at Heidelberg College and Andover Newton Theological School. He has served congregations in Deer Lodge, Tennessee, as well as the Pioneer Larger Parish (14 years) and Christ UCC/Orrville (24 years) in our Association. Presently, he is an Annuitant Visitor for the Pension Board. Along the way, he directed church camps for 40 years, served on our Conference Board of Directors and Association Council including Moderator, and chaired numerous committees. From his youth, he has been involved in wider UCC and global ministries. He is the author of *Meanderings with Grace: Glimpses of God in the Ordinary*. And married to Grace for 50 years.

David Gingrich has been a member of St. John's UCC, Dover OH since 1982, when he was married to his wife, Jane, by Rev. Al Irby. Jane grew up in St. John's and they have raised their three sons there. He has been active at the church in various capacities, primarily focused around finances and leadership on church council. Professionally, he is an accountant and business manager. After a 45-year career, David retired in 2020 from Lauren International, where he had been CFO for over 20 years. In his retirement, he plans to travel with his wife & family and hopes to be able to give back to the community.

Rev. Steven Gower was ordained in the Christian Church (DOC) and is Pastor at Olmsted Community Church. He is a great cook, enjoys the MCU with his family, and has a plethora of crazy socks. Steven is a life-long learner and considers curiosity one of his greatest strengths. Steven lives with his wife, three children and a 55lb lap dog in Olmsted Falls. Steven coaches youth soccer and is on the Board for Brenda Glass Trauma Center. He serves on the General Board of the Christian Church (DOC) in the US and Canada, as chair of the Mission Finance Committee of the General Board, and on the Administrative Committee.

Rev. George R. Graham serves as Vice President of the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries (CHHSM), UCC, a position he has held since 2018. He also serves as co-worship leader of Archwood United Church of Christ in Cleveland. From 2000-2007, George served in the national setting of the United Church of Christ as associate for leadership gifts and as editorial director for professional and academic resources with The Pilgrim Press. George was ordained into Christian ministry by the UCC in 2003. He holds an M.Div. degree from Vanderbilt University and a B.A. degree from Hiram College. He is currently enrolled in the D.Min. program at Eden Theological Seminary. He and his family live in Lakewood and are members of Lakewood Congregational Church, UCC.

Donna Green was born and raised in Brooklyn, NY, and moved to Denver in 2000 to live with her partner and accept a position as Lead Trainer with the State of Colorado. She was soon recruited by the Office of Economic Development as Supervisor of Training and Assessment. In 2009, Donna and her wife founded an award-winning soft skills training company, which enabled them to share their expertise in promoting dynamic company growth at the corporate level. After moving to Ohio, her wife was called as Associate Pastor at Trinity UCC, Canton. Donna is fully engaged in the church community and is supporting and initiating programs and

ministries: promoting spiritual self-awareness, equality, diversity and inclusion. She is on the church tech team and is involved in the Open and Affirming process. Her passions include education, hospitality, singing contemporary Christian music and old fashion social gaming.

Pastor Tina Green has served in ministry for over 25 years, as a Christian educator, youth director, and pastor in the WRA/LWA. Over the years, she has served on various association departments and committees and as a conference delegate to General Synod. In 2019, she completed "Nurturing the Call: Spiritual Guidance" program at the Shalem Institute and in May, she was ordained. She serves Fairport Harbor Congregational Church.

Pastor Michele Humphrey, a licensed and ordained minister, has served as the pastor of Imani United Church of Christ in Euclid, OH for 17 years. Pastor Humphrey is known for ministering on tough topics such as domestic violence, sexual abuse, abusive power in leadership, issues that affect the black community, and empowering messages that challenge the listener to move beyond mediocrity and complacency in order to live an empowered life through Jesus Christ. Under Pastor Humphrey's leadership, Imani UCC has a social justice ministry that speaks to the ills of the community to hold those in leadership accountable, a food pantry that feeds hundreds of families monthly, a clothing ministry, and many other ministries that help to provide physical, spiritual and social empowerment. Pastor Humphrey earned a MA degree in 2005 from Ashland Theological Seminary in Christian Ministry and a Diploma of Theology in Black Church Studies in 2001 from the McCreary Center for African American Religious Studies.

Robert Lampley was born and raised in Chicago, attained a BA in Communication at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and JD at the University of Wisconsin Law School. He is currently a Staff Attorney in the Office for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education. Previously, he served as the Assistant Director of the Office of Civil Rights and Institutional Equity at Central Michigan University. He began his career as an Assistant State Public Defender for the Office of the Wisconsin State Public Defender. In the community, he is deacon and member of the Board of Trustees at Mt. Zion Congregational Church UCC and member of the Cleveland Heights Racial Justice Task Force.

Rev. Dr. Doyle Luckenbaugh began his ministry serving The Line Mountain Charge UCC, Leck Kill, Pa and St. John's UCC, Williamsport, PA. He then served two congregations in Ohio, The Suffield UCC, Suffield, OH and The Church in Silver Lake, Silver Lake, OH. Returning to PA, he concluded his ministry as the Senior Pastor of Bethany UCC, Ephrata, PA., retiring in 2001. During his retired years he has volunteered weekly on the Habitat for Humanity East Central Ohio construction crew and is a strong advocate among the churches in Ohio on behalf of Back Bay Mission, Biloxi, Mississippi. Doyle served three years in the US Marine Corps and is a graduate of Catawba College (BA), Lancaster Theological Seminary (BD and MD), and Ashland Theological Seminary (DMin).

Rev. Melinda S. Quellhorst was called Dec. 1, 2019 to Vermilion UCC Congregational. Mindy grew up as a PK, that is preacher's kid and teacher's kid. She is UCC from her very beginnings; baptized, confirmed, and ordained. She attended and graduated from Heidelberg University with a BA in 1983 and Eden Seminary with an MDiv in 1988. Mindy has served 5 UCC churches. She has been the Moderator of the Ohio (Heartland) Conference and served on the Church and Ministry Committee. One of her joys is working with their German partners, Kirchengemeinschaft (full communion). She and her spouse have 4 adult children and the new joys of her life are her grandchildren.

Rev. Jason Rissler grew up in Lancaster, Pennsylvania and moved to Strasburg, Ohio in 2011. He has been serving as pastor at St. John United Church of Christ in Strasburg since 2015. In previous assignments, Jason worked in church planting both in Pennsylvania and Ohio. He and his wife Heather have four children ages: 10, 13, 16 and 18. This keeps them busy with sports and school activities. He is dually credentialed through both

the Mennonite Church USA and the United Church of Christ. Jason graduated from Rosedale Bible College as well as Eastern Mennonite University. He is grateful to be in Strasburg and at St. John!

Rev. Charlotte Still-Noble was ordained in the UCC in 1982. From then until her retirement in 2013, she served in both parishes and the UCC National Office, and consulted church-related organizations, assisting them with staff, board reorganization and development, mission clarification, and strategic planning. Charlotte holds a BA from the University of South Carolina, MDiv from Yale University, and MBA from Case Western Reserve University. She is an author and columnist, and has been involved in many public ministries, including the AIDS Funding Collaborative and the Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services Board of Cuyahoga County.

Gloria Sturghill grew up Baptist and attended church sporadically after college. She has been an active member of Plymouth Church in _ for over 20 years. As they grow and move forward, she's excited to be a part of it. A lot of her time at Plymouth has involved working with youth group, summer service trips, volunteer projects in the city, and teaching Sunday school and Confirmation. She is also a member of the Chancel Choir. She has served in many capacities, from being a Greeter on Sunday mornings, to President of Council, and pretty much every department in between. When work as head of the Search Committee that called Rev. Matthew Wooster as Senior Minister was done, she was asked to be a member of the Finance Committee (her day job is in finance and accounting) and got more involved a new initiative: Plymouth ARE – Anti-Racism for Equity.

Rev. Kate Walsh currently serves, part-time, as a worship leader for Archwood United Church of Christ and is a facilitator of one of our Community of Practice groups. She retired from ministry this past June after serving within our Association for 22 years. She has served in a variety of positions, including moderator, council member, synod representative, pulpit supply, long-term pulpit supply, church vitality workshop leader, summer camp counselor, Christian educator, associate pastor, and pastor. She has also served twice as an interim minister for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Since retiring, Kate is pleased to have the time, once again, to serve on our Association Council.

Rev. John Werner is pastor of First Congregational UCC in Jefferson, an Open and Affirming Church. He is Vice President for the Mental Health and Recovery Services Board of Ashtabula County. He has also been elected the incumbent Vice President of Volunteer Services and Historical Restoration at the Jefferson Depot, a living history museum. He helped organize Ashtabula County's first Pride Event with over 2,000 people in attendance. Pastor John is always thinking up new ideas to connect the local church to the wider community. He is involved in his community both in the Ashtabula County Rose Society as well as the Ashtabula Friendly Quilters a skill he picked up during the Covid Pandemic. John seeks to bring authenticity and warmth to his ministry setting.