

Karen Georgia A. Thompson

General Minister and President / Chief Executive Officer

[Email Rev. Dr. Thompson.](#)

The Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia A. Thompson is the General Minister and President and the Chief Executive Officer of the United Church of Christ. Rev. Thompson is the first woman and first woman of African descent to serve as leader of the denomination. She was elected at General Synod 34 in 2023. She is a writer, poet and theologian who has contributed to numerous publications.

As General Minister and President, Rev. Thompson is the spiritual leader of the denomination, representing the UCC ecumenically and speaking on behalf of the denomination. She is the leader of the denominational offices in Cleveland, overseeing the daily operations of the national offices which includes 115 staff persons and an annual budget of \$22 million.

Prior to this call, Rev. Thompson served in the national setting of the United Church of Christ for 14 years – two years as Minister for Racial Justice, eight years as Minister for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations, and four years as the Associate General Minister for Wider Church Ministries and Co-Executive for Global Ministries. She was elected as Associate General Minister in 2019.

Her passion for justice and equity has informed her focus on justice in the global context. This passion for justice is a catalyst for her global advocacy to reduce the marginalization experienced by African descendant peoples and other communities

globally. She continues to participate in global forums, bringing her leadership to address a variety of issues including global racial justice, gender justice, and human rights.

Before joining the national ministries staff in 2009, Rev. Thompson served in the Florida Conference United Church of Christ as a Pastor and on the Conference staff as the Minister for Disaster Response and Recovery. She also worked in the nonprofit arena for over 10 years in leadership positions.

She continues to contribute her time to the leadership and mission of several organizations, including Church World Service and Bread for the World. She is a member of the World Council of Churches Executive Committee and Central Committee, the National Council of Churches Governing Board, and she is the President of the World Communion of Reformed Churches. She also serves on the United Church of Christ Board, United Church Funds Board, and is a trustee of the Pension Boards United Church of Christ.

Rev. Thompson earned a Bachelor of Arts from Brooklyn College in New York, a Master of Public Administration from North Carolina Central University in Durham, NC, and a Master of Divinity from Union Theological Seminary in New York. She also studied Public Policy at Duke University and earned her Doctor of Ministry at Seattle University. She was awarded an honorary doctorate from Heidelberg University in 2023.

Her book of poetry, *Drums in Our Veins*, was published in 2022. *Painting Rainbows with Raindrops*, her second book of poetry, is pending publication.