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**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



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United Church of Christ selects the Rev. John Dorhauer as candidate to become ninth general minister and president

Dorhauer's candidacy must be confirmed by United Church of Christ Board of Directors, General Synod delegates.

CLEVELAND (Feb. 13, 2015) – The United Church of Christ's General Minister and President Search Committee has identified the Rev. John C. Dorhauer, conference minister of the Southwest Conference of the UCC, as the candidate to become the ninth leader of the denomination.

"John is an articulate visionary who has a deep love for the United Church of Christ and will help us shape the future of the church for years to come," said the Rev. Kent Siladi, co-chair of the search committee.

"I am deeply humbled and honored by the trust and confidence placed in me by the search committee," Dorhauer said. "I am grateful for the work they have given over the last four-and-a-half months. Taking nothing for granted, I look forward to meeting with the full board in March."

Dorhauer's candidacy must be confirmed first by the United Church of Christ Board of Directors by a two-thirds vote at its upcoming meeting March 19, then by the delegates of the 30th General Synod, meeting in Cleveland June 26-30, with a 60-percent majority.

Dorhauer served as associate conference minister in the Missouri Mid-South Conference for five years prior to being called to the Southwest Conference, and has also served churches in rural Missouri. Dorhauer has a Master of Divinity degree from Eden Theological Seminary and a Doctor of Ministry degree from United Theological Seminary, where he studied white privilege and its effects on the church.

Friday's announcement concludes a search process set in motion in mid-August, when current General Minister and President the Rev. Geoffrey A. Black announced his plans to retire at the conclusion of General Synod.

The 18-member search committee spent three months on the process to identify the next general minister and president, seeking a leader who is "a person of faith, an articulate and theologically-grounded preacher and speaker, and an innovator who leads with clarity and purpose" to act as CEO and chief spokesperson of the UCC. If elected this year, Dorhauer will be charged with preparing the denomination for the future by planning, coordinating, and implementing the mission of the church.

"The committee made its decision after careful prayer and intentional deliberation over the past months," said the Rev. Bernard R. Wilson, co-chair of the search committee and chair of the UCC Board of Directors. "We are enthusiastic about his recommendation."

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About the United Church of Christ:

The United Church of Christ is a mainline Protestant denomination with nearly 1 million members and more than 5,100 congregations nationwide. Headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio, the UCC is a church of many firsts, including the first mainline denomination to ordain a woman, the first to ordain an openly-gay man and the first predominantly white denomination to ordain an African American.

The UCC and its members are tireless advocates for social issues such as immigration reform, racial equality, LGBT rights, marriage equality, environmental protection and economic justice.