



Rev. John C. Dorhauer

General Minister and President
The United Church of Christ

The Rev. John C. Dorhauer, author and theologian, currently serves as ninth General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ.

Before his election at the 30th General Synod in June 2015, Dorhauer was the Conference Minister of the Southwest Conference of the UCC, the regional body that provides support and services to 47 local UCC congregations and clergy within Arizona, New Mexico and El Paso, Texas.

Prior to his role at the Southwest Conference, Dorhauer served as associate conference minister in the Missouri Mid-South Conference, and also served First Congregational United Church of Christ and Zion United Church of Christ, in rural Missouri. Dorhauer received a B.A. in Philosophy from Cardinal Glennon College (1983), and has a Master of Divinity degree from Eden Theological Seminary (1988), the same year he was ordained in the United Church of Christ. He received a Doctor of Ministry degree from United Theological Seminary (2004), where he studied white privilege and its effects on the church. His second book, *Beyond Resistance: The Institutional Church Meets the Postmodern World*, was released in June 2015. His first book (written with Sheldon Culver), *Steeplejacking: How the Christian Right is Hijacking Mainstream Religion*, was published in June 2007.

Dorhauer is passionate about justice. Two statements that shape his theology are: "God is love. God is just." He is also passionate about the future of the denomination, insistent "that the Holy Spirit envisions a future in which the United Church of Christ matters." During his tenure, he is calling on the denomination to rethink itself and to consider new ways of "being church" in light of reduced societal interest in institutional religion, and the steep decline in the membership of the UCC since the 1960s. He says alternatives to institutional churches, what some call the "emergent church," will not immediately supplant, but will grow alongside the institutional church for a long time.

Under his leadership during his first year in office, UCC congregations addressed racism through the Black Lives Matter movement and the denomination's White Privilege curriculum, released in September 2016, which Dorhauer initiated; campaigned against discrimination, including that aimed at the LGBTQ community; and offered extravagant welcome and visible public support for Muslim neighbors through its Building Bridges initiative.

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BIOGRAPHIES

Along with his passion for justice, Dorhauer has a passion for and love of baseball – specifically the St. Louis Cardinals – music, literature and poetry. He has been married to his wife for nearly 31 years and they have three children.

Dorhauer was chosen as the GMP candidate by an 18-member search committee in February 2015. His candidacy was confirmed by the UCC Board of Directors by a two-thirds vote in March. He was elected at the 30th General Synod, which met June 26-30, 2015 in Cleveland. Dorhauer replaced the Rev. Dr. Geoffrey Black, as the ninth person to lead the UCC since the denomination was formed in 1957.

Dorhauer was the first person to conduct a legal same sex wedding in the state of Arizona when he performed the wedding service of David Laurence and Kevin Patterson on October 17, 2014. In June 2015, facing verbal threats while standing across from 250 armed bikers targeting a local mosque, Dorhauer, as nominee for United Church of Christ general minister and president, joined 250 inter-religious supporters from Christian, Jewish and Muslim faiths opposing a protest outside the Islamic Center of Phoenix. In October 2015, in one of his first directives as general minister and president, Dorhauer issued a call to leaders of the United Church of Christ to stand against planned demonstrations in their community targeted at Muslims and their places of worship. That same month Dorhauer also went to a Kansas City high school to rally with students countering a protest of Westboro Baptist Church, which opposed the school's decision to crown a transgender girl as homecoming queen.

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