



Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia A. Thompson

**Associate General Minister,
Wider Church Ministries and Operations
Co-Executive for Global Ministries
The United Church of Christ**

The Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia A. Thompson is the Associate General Minister (AGM) for Wider Church Ministries (WCM) and Operations in the United Church of Christ and Co-Executive for Global Ministries with the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). She is an inspiring preacher and theologian, who shares her skills and gifts in a variety of settings nationally and internationally, often using her poetry as a part of her ministry.

As AGM for Wider Church Ministries and Operations, Rev. Dr. Thompson provides strategic visioning and leadership for the programmatic ministries of Global Ministries, Humanitarian Aid and Development, Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations, Events and Scholarships Management and Archives. In collaboration with the other two elected officers, they work together to fulfill the mandates of the General Synod and the United Church of Christ Board.

Former roles in the National setting include two years as Minister for Racial Justice and 8 years as Minister for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations. She has effectively facilitated Sacred Conversations on Race workshops with congregations and Conferences. Her passion for racial justice moved her work into a global context to participate in efforts to reduce the marginalization experienced by African descendant communities.

As the Ecumenical Officer for the UCC she nurtured relationship with critical partners like the World Council of Churches and coordinated theological dialogues and ecumenical initiatives. She is a strong proponent of human rights and was instrumental in guiding the six-year process for the United Church of Christ/United Church of Canada full communion relationship. She is currently a member of the National Council of Churches Committee that planned and implemented A.C.T. Now to End Racism initiative and continues to lead the on-going efforts to dismantle racism.

Rev. Dr. Thompson provides leadership for the joint United Church of Canada and United Church of Christ committee working on the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024) and was invited to address the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent about the challenges of racial injustice in North America.

Her ecumenical expertise is evident in her leadership roles within the World Council of Churches (WCC) on the Central Committee, the Joint Working Group with the Roman Catholic Church (JWG), and the Commission for Education and Ecumenical Formation as the Rapporteur for the work of the commission.

Other ecumenical elected leadership positions include: Secretary of the National Council of Churches, Secretary/Treasurer for the Caribbean and North American Area Council of the World Communion of Reformed Churches and Treasurer for Churches Uniting in Christ.

Her ecumenical and interreligious commitments have overlapped with her interest and implementation of global consultations on multiple religious belonging. Her leadership in this area has created opportunities for dialogue in the church and created

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safe space for engaging the variety of expressions of religious multiplicity. Her doctoral dissertation was focused on research in this area, looking specifically at the ways in which African Caribbean people continue to practice African derived religious and spiritual expressions along with other religions and often times with Christianity.

Before joining the National staff, Karen Georgia 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 sector for over 10 years in senior leadership positions.

She is a gifted writer and poet whose writings have been published in books, journals and on-line publications. Her book of poetry *Drums in Our Veins* will be published in 2020 and is a compilation of poems that focus on the injustices facing people of African Descent and the fight and desire for racial justice globally. Born in Kingston, Jamaica, her poetry and writings reflect her Jamaican heritage and culture as well as the traditions and lore of her Ancestors.

Karen Georgia earned a BA 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 Doctorate in Ministry at Seattle University.

She is the mother of two sons – Everette and Patrick and has three grandchildren – Giovan, Elijah and Sara who are affectionately named by her as Peanut, Pumpkin and Pepper.