

## BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE

### Rev. Traci deVon Blackmon



*Until the lion tells the story, the hunter will always be the hero.  
~ West African Proverb*

Rev. Traci Blackmon is the Acting Executive Minister of Justice & Witness Ministries of The United Church of Christ and Senior Pastor of Christ The King United Church of Christ in Florissant, MO.

Initially ordained in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Rev. Blackmon served in various ministry capacities for nine years prior to becoming ordained in the United Church of Christ and installed as the first woman and 18<sup>th</sup> pastor in the 159-year history of Christ The King United Church of Christ. A registered nurse with more than 25 years of healthcare experience, Rev. Blackmon's clinical focus was cardiac care. In later years, her focus shifted to mobile healthcare in underserved communities, with the greatest health disparities being in her region. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing from Birmingham - Southern College (1985), and a Master of Divinity degree from Eden Theological Seminary (2009).

As pastor, Rev. Blackmon leads Christ The King in an expanded understanding of church as a sacred launching pad of community engagement and change. This ethos has led to a tripling of both membership and worship attendance over the last seven years, expanding membership engagement opportunities, and the establishment of community outreach programs. Community programming includes a computer lab, tutoring, continuing education classes, summer programming, a robotics team, children's library, and girls' mentoring program. All housed in the church.

Regionally, Rev. Blackmon's signature initiatives have included ***Healthy Mind, Body, and Spirit***, a mobile faith-based outreach program she designed to impact health outcomes in impoverished areas. ***Sacred Conversations on Solomon's Porch***, quarterly clergy in-services designed to equip local clergy to assess physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual health concerns within congregational life. ***Sista SOS Summit***, an intergenerational health symposium for women and girls. In addition to, ***Souls to the Polls STL***, an ecumenical, multi-faith collaborative that was successful in providing over 2,800 additional rides to the polls during local and national elections.

A featured voice with many regional, national, and international media outlets and a frequent contributor to print publications, Rev. Blackmon's communal leadership and work in the aftermath of the killing of Michael Brown, Jr., in Ferguson, MO, has gained her both national and international recognition and audiences from the White House to the Carter Center to the Vatican. She was appointed to the Ferguson Commission by Governor Jay

Nixon and to the President's Advisory Council on Faith-Based Neighborhood Partnerships for the White House by President Barack H. Obama.

Rev. Blackmon toured the nation with Rev. Dr. William Barber of Moral Mondays and Repairer of the Breach, Rev. Dr. James Forbes of The Drum Major Institute and Pastor Emeritus of The Riverside Church in New York, and Sister Simone Campbell of Nuns on the Bus, proclaiming the need for a Moral Revival in this nation.

Rev. Blackmon is a graduate of Leadership St. Louis and currently serves on the boards of The Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, Chicago Theological Seminary, and WomanPreach!

This year, Rev. Blackmon co-authored the newly released White Privilege curriculum through the United Church of Christ and has received several awards and recognitions, inclusive of:

- The White House President's Volunteer Service Award
- The St. Louis American Stellar Award
- 2015 Ebony Magazine Power 100
- Deluxe Magazine Power 100
- St. Louis University - Community Leader of the Year
- 100 Black Men of St. Louis Community Leader of the Year
- The Coalition of Black Trade Unionist - Drum Major Award
- NAACP - Rosa Parks Award
- Rosa Parks Award - United Trade Unionist
- The Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis Woman in Leadership Award
- National Planned Parenthood Faith Leader Award
- The United Church of Christ - Antoinette Brown Leadership Award
- Honorary Doctorate, Eden Theological Seminary

Rev. Blackmon currently resides in both St. Louis, MO and Cleveland, OH and was recently named as one of St. Louis' 100 most influential voices. Rev. Blackmon is the proud mother of three adult children: Kortni Devon; Harold, II; and Tyler Wayne Blackmon.