

Diane Kenaston

Wesley House, Jesus Lane, Cambridge CB5 8BJ

rev.diane.kenaston@gmail.com

UK: +44 7389 730718

US: +1 757 933 1237

www.dianekenaston.com

Pastoral Appointments

Sabbatical

July 2021- June 2022

Appointed to a Sabbatical year with the approval of West Virginia Board of Ordained Ministry

- Engage in spiritual renewal through spiritual direction, guided Ignatian retreat, coaching, and crafting a rule of life coinciding with the first year of a long-term transatlantic move
- Develop a freelance certified clergy coaching ministry
- Write a devotional book for churches that are in transition, whether through merging, closing, relocating, or otherwise discerning their next faithful chapter
- Pursue ecumenical certification in intentional interim ministry

University United Methodist Church (University City, MO)

July 2014-June 2021

Solo pastor of a historic urban congregation who chose to merge with another congregation

- Initiated merger discernment and led congregation to consider multiple options for a sustainable and missional future
- Built consensus to leave the existing church building, provided theological and liturgical meaning to the grief process, and facilitated merger negotiations, resulting in a unanimous congregational vote for merger
- Prior to merger, led through both adaptive and technical changes, including clarifying vision, implementing simplified board model, shifting from staff-led to lay-led ministry, negotiating memorandum of understanding with preschool, selling parsonage, addressing financial audit points, partnering with other churches and synagogues, addressing white fragility, and becoming reconciling (LGBTQIA+ affirming)
- Increased per capita giving, and improved apportionment pay-out from 83% the first year to 100% every subsequent year, including prepaying apportionments during merger
- Worked directly with people with mental illness, neurodiverse people, people of color, people in poverty, young people, LGBTQIA+ people, international students, and dechurched people

- Focused mission efforts and restarted two significant ministries: Open Door Pantry and SHED (Safe Housing for the Elderly and Disabled), which resulted in increased reach, efficacy, number of volunteers, and financial contributions

Crossroads United Methodist Church (Waverly, WV)

July 2011-June 2014

Solo pastor of a growing rural church passionate about mission

- Gave 109% to apportionments each year
- Gave 25% of revenue away to service and justice ministries beyond the church walls
- Received eight professions of faith over three years
- Led vibrant intergenerational ministries, hands-on local mission efforts, Disciple Bible Studies, and congregational care teams for home communion, which expanded to include sharing communion with unchurched people in nearby trailer parks

Crossroads & Waverly United Methodist Churches (Waverly, WV)

July 2011-Dec. 2012

Solo pastor of a rural two-point charge that discerned a need to separate

- Served two congregations: Waverly UMC (15-20 average attendance) and Crossroads UMC (100 average attendance), both in a rural working-class community where literacy and running water could not be assumed
- Broke barriers as first female pastor in church and community history
- At Waverly UMC, baptized one adult, confirmed one youth, and reached 200 people twice/year in clothing giveaway
- Identified systemic issues between the two congregations, and led discernment process to separate the charge, working with the district for amicable separation of shared resources like the parsonage

Other Work Experience

Clergy Coach, www.dianekenaston.com

September 2021-present

Coach for clergy, seminarians, and lay leaders transforming themselves and their communities

- Coaching competencies: transitioning churches (including closing, merging, restarting, realigning, and relocating), interim ministry, congregational discernment, and leaving well; adaptive change, systems theory, and emotionally healthy spirituality; physical, mental, emotional, and financial well-being; mental illness, ADHD, trauma recovery, marriage and family relationships, and sexual/gender identity; asset-based community development, stewardship, overcoming “white church industrial complex,” and vocational discernment; intersectional justice, anti-racism, equity and inclusion, cross-cultural and multi-ethnic ministry, and prophetic preaching

Chaplain and Pastoral Intern

2008-2010

Internships with diverse congregations and communities

- Iglesia Metodista Unida Douglas St. (Cartersville, Georgia), a multicultural, bilingual Spanish/English church
- Puertas Abiertas (Open Door) and Moorefield Ministries (Moorefield, West Virginia), six congregations with varying numbers, resources, races, ethnicities, languages, literacy, and immigration statuses
- Christ Church United Methodist (Charleston, West Virginia), historic downtown church
- Central Outreach and Advocacy Center (Atlanta, Georgia), downtown faith-based non-profit for housing-insecure persons and people experiencing homelessness
- Lewisburg United Methodist Church (Lewisburg, West Virginia), county seat church

Writing and Editing

2004-2009

- Research and editorial assistant for the *Cambridge Dictionary of Christian Theology*
- U.S. Senate Intern, writing policy briefs, responding to constituents, and speechwriting
- Correspondent for university's Office of International Education, writing monthly columns
- Assistant Editor for *West Virginia Annual Conference Journal*

Selected Community Leadership

Sustainable Housing and Equitable Development (SHED), Board Member

2019-2021

- Expanded organizational capacity and financial sustainability
- Reimagined and renamed the organization
- Formulated mission statement, values, and strategic plan
- Restructured board and revised bylaws
- Hired first executive director
- Oversaw financial audit
- Recruited largest financial gift in organization history
- Positioned SHED to qualify for community development block grants

General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, Board Member

2008-2016

- Served terms as Human Resources Chairperson and Board Secretary, as well as on the Executive Committee
- Hired a new executive director

- Restructured board to globalize a previously US-centric agency of The United Methodist Church
- Presided over meetings with participants from eight nations, including countries in Asia, Africa, Europe, and North America

Advocate for Gender Justice

- Young Clergy Women International, Subgroup Administrator for United Methodist Young Clergy Women and Closing/Merging/Relocating 2011-present
- United Methodist Queer Clergy Caucus, Membership Secretary 2018-2020
- Missouri Reconciling Ministries Network, Interim Convener 2019 2014-2020
- Circles of Grace on Race and Human Sexuality, Facilitator 2016-2018
- West Virginia Reconciling Ministries Network, Founding Member 2013-2014
- Monitor for Inclusiveness (race, ethnicity, age, gender, and ability) for the United Methodist General Conference, Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference, and West Virginia Annual Conference 2010-2012

Anti-Racist Activist/Educator

- Black Methodist for Church Renewal, St. Louis Chapter, Affiliate Member 2020-2021
- [Faith and Race Curriculum Webinar](#), Trainer 2020
- *Me & White Supremacy*, Circle Way Host 2020
- U City Conversations on Race, Class, and Culture, Co-Convener 2019-2020
- *White Fragility* Community Discussion, Facilitator 2019-2020
- Parents as Allies and Change Agents (PACA), Community Moderator and Facilitator for sessions on decolonizing religion and wealth 2019-2020

Ecumenical Spiritual Leader

- Open Door Pantry, creating [a new board model of high-trust relationships and shared leadership](#), in which volunteers and neighbors (formerly known as “clients”) jointly oversee finances, governance, and operations 2019-2021
- Anam Cara Intentional Community, shared leadership 2015-2021
- Intern Supervisor for seminarians from Eden Theological Seminary 2014-2021
- Guest for “Evangelism” and “Methodist History” seminary courses 2014-2021
- Organized “Sisters in Spirit” Retreat for West Virginia clergywomen by leveraging connectional relationships to bring in international keynote speakers on a limited budget 2015

Writing and Publishing

Book Contributor

- “Love’s Competing Demands.” [Holy Contradictions: What’s Next for the People Called Methodist?](#) edited by Brian K. Milford, Abingdon Press, 2018, pp 55-64
- “A Prayer for Letting Go of White Fragility” and Devotion on Isaiah 58:5-6, [Speaking Truth: Women Raising Their Voices in Prayer](#), edited by J. Paige Boyer, Emily Peck-McClain, Shannon Sullivan, Theresa S. Thames, and Jen Tyler, Abingdon Press, 2020, pp 180-181, 191
- Devotion on Luke 21:14-15, [We Pray With Her: Encouragement for All Women Who Lead](#), edited by Emily Peck-McClain, Danyelle Trexler, Jen Tyler, J. Paige Boyer, and Shannon Sullivan, Abingdon Press, 2018

Online Publications (Selected)

- [Betrayal In Holy Week](#), Fidelity Magazine, March 2017
- [Confession of a Bisexual United Methodist](#), Missouri Reconciling Ministries, 2019
- [Genealogy and Anti-Racism](#), ChristineSleeter.com, February 2018
- [God Grew Bigger](#), Fidelity Magazine, July 2018
- [In Search of a Non-White Baby Jesus and Post-Partum Mary](#), Fidelity Magazine, December 2020
- [Is Genealogy Racist?](#), BitterSweet, April 2019

Education

Masters of Divinity (M.Div.), Candler School of Theology, Emory University May 2011

- Concentration: Scripture and Interpretation
- Certificate: Women in Theology and Ministry
- Honors: Woodruff Fellow, Slay and Thompson Awards, First Career Seminary Award, Fund for Theological Education (FTE) Congregational Fellow
- GPA 3.9

Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), *summa cum laude*, University of Richmond May 2008

- Double Major: International Studies and Spanish
- Minor: Leadership Studies
- Honors: Phi Beta Kappa, University Scholar, Omicron Delta Kappa
- GPA 3.9

Recent Continuing Education

- Fundamentals of Transitional Ministry, Interim Ministry Network in progress
- Coaching4Clergy Professional Coach Training Program in progress
- Family of Origin Group for Clergy and Caring Professionals 2014-2021
- Decolonizing the Church with Brandon & Erica Wrencher 2021
- Mosaix Multi-Ethnic Church Cohort 2020-2021
- Octavia Butler’s Earthseed and Black Imagination, Eden Seminary 2020
- Native Immersion, Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference 2020
- NAMI Family-to-Family (National Alliance on Mental Illness) 2020
- Black Theology, Eden Theological Seminary 2019

Professional Associations & Certifications

West Virginia Annual Conference, The United Methodist Church

- Ordained Elder and Member in Full Connection 2014
- Commissioned Elder and Provisional Member 2011
- Elected leadership roles have included Covenant Council, Justice and Advocacy, Council on Youth Ministries, district strategy team, and jurisdictional delegation

Current Certifications

- Safe Sanctuaries (Child Protection / Safeguarding) 2011
- Prepare/Enrich for premarital and marital counseling 2012
- Mental Health First Aid 2017
- Question Persuade Refer (suicide prevention) 2018
- Interim Ministry Network in progress
- Associate Certified Coach with International Coaching Federation in progress