

About Rev. Dr. Hwa-Young Chong



The Rev. Dr. Hwa-Young is an ordained elder in the United Methodist Church. She was born in Seoul, Korea, and grew up in a Christian and Buddhist family. She came to the United States to pursue graduate studies in theology. Her original plan was to go back to Korea after completing her degrees, but God had a different plan!

Hwa-Young loves parish ministry and considers the church to be a dynamic movement through which all people God work together to bring a positive transformation in the world. Passionate about sharing God's love and grace through mission and ministry, she is committed to inter-religious dialogue, cross-racial and cross-cultural ministry, and peace and justice engagements. She also teaches spirituality and theology courses as an adjunct faculty member at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois.

She is a graduate of Ewha Woman's University in Korea and has a Ph.D. in Theological and Historical Studies from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. Her book *In Search of God's Power in Broken Bodies: A Theology of Maun* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013) explores the theological and sacramental meaning of the body of Christ through the lens of oppressed and abused Korean women.

Hwa-Young loves books, music, arts, walking, and traveling. She is currently working on a yoga teacher certificate. She and her husband enjoy visiting spiritual places in different cultures and religions of our global village. She will spend two months in Taiwan this summer, working on a Christian mindfulness project and visiting Taoist, Confucian, and Buddhist prayer and meditation services.

Her Korean name "Hwa-Young" means eternal peace. Her English nickname is Hannah.

About Rev. Dr. Vance P. Ross



The Rev. Dr. Vance P. Ross is an ordained elder in the United Methodist Church. A native of Bluefield, WV, Rev. Ross has a Bachelor's degree from West Virginia Wesleyan University; a Master of Divinity degree from Gammon Theological Seminary (Atlanta); and a Doctor of Ministry degree from United Theological Seminary (Dayton, OH). Ross served on the leadership team of the General Board of Discipleship (Nashville), returning a few years later when that agency was re-organized as UM Discipleship Ministries. His work focused on working with annual conference leaders to build and strengthen the core process of disciple making in local church

ministries.

Vance has a proven track record of effective pastoral ministry. Prior to working for the GBOD, he served First UMC in Hyattsville, MD, leading this multicultural church as it established a

second campus, offered multiple bible study classes, ESL classes and Spanish language worship services. From 2011 to 2015 he served as Senior Pastor at Gordon Memorial UMC, Nashville, an urban church of 1100 members. During his tenure, worship attendance grew significantly and the church as cited for its evangelistic outreach.

Vance is currently Senior Pastor of Central UMC in Atlanta, Georgia. The church prides itself as “the church at the heart of the city with the city at heart.” According to the church’s website, “some of the most progressive and aggressive movements for racial equality were engendered by and through Central. The church helped mold the civic and religious character of Atlanta as the city evolved into the southeast’s leader educationally and industrially, as well as the hub for civil rights activism.”

Vance has received numerous honors and awards, including the Isaac R. Clark Preaching Award at Interdenominational Theological Center (twice); Vision Awards from the Convocation of UMC Black Churches (twice), a servant leader award at Clark Memorial Church, Nashville and a Citizen’s Award from Hyattsville’s City Council.

Dr. Ross is a contributor to the recent publication *I’m Black. I’m Christian. I’m Methodist*. Edited by Rudy Rasmus (Abingdon, 2020).

He is married to the Rev. Bridgette D. Young Ross, recently retired Dean of the Chapel and Spiritual Life at Emory University, Atlanta, GA. He has three adult children: Kristina, Alyssa and Bryant. He has two grandchildren, Christopher and Jaylie.