



Our Keynote Speaker...

John C. Dorhauer

General Minister and President

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

John began his ministry serving First Congregational United Church of Christ and Zion United Church of Christ in rural Missouri. He then served as Associate Conference Minister in the Missouri Mid-South Conference, and then Conference Minister of the Southwest Conference of the UCC prior to his election as General Minister and President.

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 John was ordained in the United Church of Christ. John received a Doctor of Ministry degree from United Theological Seminary (2004); his area of focus — white privilege and its effects on the church.

With a personal theology shaped in the passionate conviction that God is love and God is just, John has embodied the United Church of Christ's vision of "A Just World for All" throughout his ministry. On October 17, 2014, Dorhauer conducted the first legal same sex wedding in the state of Arizona when he performed the wedding service of David Laurence and Kevin Patterson.

In his first term as General Minister and President, recognizing increasing sensitivities in this country around race, John initiated the collaborative creation of a curriculum, "White Privilege: Let's Talk – A Resource for Transformational Dialogue". Designed to invite UCC members and others to engage in safe, meaningful, substantive, and bold conversations on race, the curriculum and accompanying facilitator's guide have been used by both UCC and non-UCC audiences.

In addition, John has partnered with the UCC Board of Directors in providing oversight for the articulation of the denomination's statements of Purpose, Vision and Mission – critical elements for the UCC's evolving organizational strategy. To activate the new vision, John invited the denomination's participation in a collective biennial mission initiative, Three Great Loves. In partnership with the UCC Board of Directors – and informed with responses from across the church to the question "what does a transformative UCC need to be in ten years?" – John has called the church to accomplish essential strategic priorities over the next 10 years to position the church for a transformative future. These include attaining inclusive excellence, developing robust technology infrastructure that benefits every expression of the church, curriculum and training towards "A Just World for All", strategic organizational alignment consistent with purpose, vision and mission, and platforms to foster and encourage innovative church.

The Shaping Our Future Campaign has been launched to generate \$4 million in new philanthropic support for marketing, technology and leadership development programs critical to the health and vitality of every expression of the church. More recently, recognizing a need for thought leadership to consider, inform and shape our responsibility for lifelong, cradle-to-the-grave theological formation, John called for a summit on theological formation, From the Ground Up, which was launched in spring 2018. At present, his focus is on re-establishing the primacy of the Local Church and the mutuality of relationship amongst the expressions of the church, undertaking an assessment of the denomination's assets devoted to resourcing local church ministry relative to the needs of the local church, and operationalizing the alignment of the national setting consistent with the newly established strategic priorities for the UCC.

John now serves as Vice-Chair of the National Council of Churches (NCC), and has co-chaired the NCC's United to End Racism campaign. He has been identified by the Center for American Progress as one of the religious leaders to watch for in 2017.

John insists that the Holy Spirit envisions a future in which the United Church of Christ matters. He is calling on the denomination to rethink itself and to consider new ways of being church in light of institutional religion's changing landscape and emerging shifts in the generational populations – believing that an emergent church is already coming alongside the institutional church. John's book *Beyond Resistance: the Institutional Church Meets the Postmodern World* is a call to the body of Christ to accept what the Spirit of the Risen Christ is doing to birth something new, vital, and relevant – all towards nurturing Beloved Community.