

Rev. Wendy Miller Olapade

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Summary

- An inspirational executive, visionary leader, and co-creator of community in secular and religious organizations
- An intuitive organizational consultant with out-of-the-box instincts for problem solving and process design with a proven record of bringing about adaptive transformation to change resistant organizations
- An artful and gifted host, facilitator and harvester of gatherings with meaning and meetings that matter

Gifts and Graces

- A highly imaginative innovator who is fascinated by ideas; able to find connections between seemingly disparate phenomena; develop entirely new concepts, theories, designs, proposals and solutions; and be a powerful, creative brainstorming partner
- A connector and social energizer with a natural fondness and understanding of other human beings who is open and transparent, puts others at ease, understands what others are experiencing and honors their path
- A strategic thinker who pinpoints core issues quickly, expresses ideas and feelings with ease and grace, weighs alternatives spontaneously, and identifies inventive ways to proceed given any scenario
- A futuristic visionary who energizes others with vivid images of forward-looking plans, mission plans, and turns aspirations into reality that inspires and pushes others to new heights
- A maximizer who focuses on strengths as a way to stimulate personal and group excellence; mentoring others in the discernment of their gifts, graces, strengths, and call to serve
- A self-assured persuader, an excellent communicator, a dedicated achiever, a go-with-the-flow partner who welcomes change, expected of unexpected.

Skills and Knowledge

- A practitioner of collaborative leadership with a warm and inviting interpersonal demeanor
- A highly productive self-starter, imaginative project manager, creative problem solver, esteemed colleague, and respected head-of-staff
- An inspirational preacher, teacher, pastor and presenter with exemplary written and verbal communication skills
- A lover and weaver of exceptional liturgy, sacred stories, sacramental moments, and unique ritual that creates community through collaboration, service to others, and faithful worship
- An experienced church planter, leader of emerging church models, and trained Interim/Transitional Minister
- An accomplished community organizer who multiplies resources across non-profits, government, academic, corporate, small business and interfaith communities
- A sought after advisor and mentor to people in secular and denominational discernment; with over 20 years experience as a certified Field Education Supervisor and Advisor to over 20 UCC members-in-discernment
- A skilled marketing and social media maven with innate gifts for visual and graphic design
- An experienced user of current technology including Wordpress web design, Facebook advertising, Google Suite and Google Ads, Instagram, Twitter, MS Publishing, MS Powerpoint, MS Excel, Quickbooks, church database management tools, online fundraising tools, and graphic design programs

Church Leadership Experience

'Founding' Pastor

2013 to Present

Sanctuary United Church of Christ (*formerly The Congregational Church of West Medford*), Medford MA

- Pastor, preacher, teacher and consultant of a congregational assessment and discovery process designed to lead a legacy congregation to a “Bold Decision” about the future. The congregation discerned a call to sell the building and hit the streets to follow Jesus into the city square with new forms of church, using their investments to ‘be sanctuary’.
- Church Planter, Community Organizer and Moral Leader who is facilitating, collaborating, and implementing an inspiring vision for a “new kinda church” with a transformed model for ministry, including: shared, progressive values inspired by faith; an out-ward facing mission of service and care that meets people where they are; a ministry model designed for deep spiritual transformation and discipleship; new forms of collaborative gathering and worship that reflect on art, prayer, meditation, diverse spiritual practice and the engagement of deep questions; broad engagement in social justice and evangelism through community organizing and secular and interfaith partnerships; and new forms of hospitality, invitation, mission and stewardship to achieve sustainability.

Pastor, Preacher, Teacher—United Church of Christ

1996 to 2012

Senior Interim Pastor, UCC Boxborough, MA

2010 to 2012

Senior Interim Pastor, Hope Central Church, Jamaica Plain, MA

2008 to 2010

Interim Pastor, Second Church, Winchester, MA

2007 to 2009

Served as Intentional Interim Pastor, Teacher, Preacher and Organizational “CEO” to each of these United Church of Christ congregations during times of transition

- Guided congregation through loss, conflict, transition and self-assessment
- Led visioning process to develop new mission statement and implementation plans
- Empowered lay leaders in discernment about the calls of settled pastors
- Identified and developed new lay leadership in congregations and new ways of “doing business”
- Developed new approaches to fund raising and stewardship
- Designed and implemented congregation’s branding across public relations print materials, monthly newsletter and web site design
- Inspired and negotiated merger of a new church and a 180 year-old church organizations and cultures
- Developed organizational structure for new church and flexible, missional by-laws and constitution
- Discerned, developed and trained new ministry teams; including care ministry team; worship, music and art ministry team; leadership circle.

Senior Pastor, First Congregational Church, Reading, MA

2001 to 2007

Successful Senior Pastor of multi-staff, theologically progressive congregation of 500 members. Responsible for all aspects of church life, ministry and business including: excellent preaching, designing and leading creative worship, pastoral care and teaching, staff supervision, leading the volunteer organizational structure and ministries including: Lay/Staff Leadership Development, Spiritual Care, Fundraising and Stewardship, Building Management, Christian Education, Christian Outreach, Church Growth, Administration, and Mentoring of Field Education Students/In-Care candidates.

Associate Pastor, Eliot Church of Newton, MA

1996 to 2001

Associate Pastor of 400 member congregation; responsible for all aspects of ordained ministry with a concentration on marketing, church growth, spiritual development and Christian Education programs for all ages

Hospice Chaplain and Volunteer Coordinator, Visiting Nurse Association of Middlesex East

1995 to 1997

Provided pastoral care and chaplaincy services to clients, families, and staff of mid-sized hospice agency providing in-home end-of-life care; developed and delivered family and community grief programs; recruited, trained, and managed team of hospice volunteers in end-of-life visitation and client support

Business Leadership Experience

Business Manager. Law Office of J. Channing Migner, Worcester, MA 2012 to 2013

Executive Assistant to the firm's principal serving as the face of the firm and the initial point of contact for new and existing clients; developed business practices to improve client experience and improve productivity of principal; reframed staff expectations and recruited and trained permanent staff; provided client-focused, empathic interface with clients in need; Lead training and development of other staff to improve the firm's integrity and stability; developed updated branding and marketing for firm.

Business and Marketing Manager, AGAPE Property, Reading, MA 2007 to 2008

Managed family business developing leads, marketing the company through internet based resources, managing customer and sub-contractor relationships and providing project management.

Business Process Re-engineering/Marketing & Sales District Management, AT&T 1978 to 1991

Six years of Business Process Re-engineering as an internal consultant during the turnaround years for AT&T, post divestiture. Ten years of Marketing and Sales Management experience in the telephone and data communications fields.

Current Community and Denominational Leadership

Board President—Medford Health Matters

Non-profit whose mission is to foster an environment of wellness and healthy lifestyles for all those who live, learn, work and play in the City of Medford. Designed and implemented the “Big Table, Big Ideas” collaboration model for turning silos into networks and developing progressive solutions across government, health, faith and non-profit sectors. The Big Table program has included topics such as Social and Economic Justice, Access to the Arts, Community Cohesion, Social Determinants of Health and Wellness, Social and Emotional Wellness, and Cultural Competencies.

Association President—Medford Interfaith Clergy

Renewed the organization, developed a shared mission of service and love of neighbor, and created a culture of interfaith collaboration, action and response to national and local events of mutual concern (ie: gun violence, food security, racial and lgbtq++ justice, and climate related crises).

Founder and Steering Committee Member—Medford Conversations Project

Volunteer organization which expands connection, establishes relationships across difference, and inspires civic engagement through open conversations about issues impacting the city. To date topics have included: Race and Ethnicity; Food, Housing and Economic Security; and Community, Connection and Place.

Founder—Safe Medford

A grass-roots group advocating for policies, services, and education to support and ensure the safety and dignity of all community members regardless of their immigration status. Safe Medford advocated for statewide protections, helped to implement Safe Communities law enforcement with local police department, and lobbied to move a polling location to insure equity.

Founder—Medford Film Collaborative

The Medford Film Collaborative combines the energies of numerous Medford organizations that actively screen and discuss a wide range of films—from independent productions that stretch our edges to “Hollywood” stories that connect us with the human condition to documentaries that challenge the status quo. Each of the member organizations use film to connect people, create community, discover new ideas, and educate ourselves about things that matter.

Delegate—2019/2021 General Synod

Representing the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ / Southern New England Conference at the 32nd General Synod in Milwaukee, WI and 33rd General Synod in Kansas City in 2021.

Member—New Ministry Initiative Colleague Group, Mass Conference

A shared community of practice with leaders of other new ministry initiatives and emerging church starts.

Education

Boston University School of Theology, Boston, MA <i>Master of Divinity—Cum Laude</i> Community Development and Leadership Award Excellence in Preaching Award & Excellence in Liturgical Reading of the Scriptures Award	1995
Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, PA <i>Bachelor of Arts—Government and Public Service</i>	1978

Certifications

Apprentice Training: Great Facilitation: An Art of Hosting Intensive Art of Hosting and Harvesting Conversations That Matter	October, 2019
New Church/New Ministry Leader Certification Center for Progressive Renewal, Atlanta, GA	2015
Intentional Interim/Transitional Minister Training and Certification Interim Ministry Network	2010
Field Education Supervisor Certification Andover Newton Theological School, Newton, MA	1998
Ordination to the Ministry of Pastor and Teacher Metropolitan Boston Association of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ	1996
Clinical Pastoral Education Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, MA	1995

Personal

Grateful Member of 12 Step Recovery and Spiritual Program	1987 to present
Jesus Lover Saved by Grace	1991 to present
Ordained Clergy—United Church of Christ	1996 to present
Proud Mama of Two Beautiful Human Beings Philip Alexander Olapade (age 26) Aaron Joseph Olapade (age 19)	1993 to present

