

Rev. Teresa “Terri” Hord Owens is the General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. She is the first person of color and second woman to lead the denomination. Since her election in 2017, Rev. Hord Owens’ ministry actively reflects the Disciples’ priority of being an anti-racist church, being a movement for wholeness, welcoming all to the Lord’s table as God has welcomed us. Her exhortation to the church is “Let’s be the church we say we are. It is in being who we say we are that we actively bear witness to God’s limitless love for all.”

In addition to collaborative service with the ministries that comprise Disciples Justice Ministries, she has been active in leadership in the Poor People’s Campaign, and other ecumenical and interfaith collaboratives, including the Faith Table. In keeping with the Disciples’ historic commitment to Christian unity, she serves in leadership at the National Council of Churches as the Treasurer of the Governing Board and a member of the World Council of Churches Central Committee.

A descendant of one of the oldest African-American free settlements in Indiana and a Disciple since young adulthood, Rev. Hord Owens earned her bachelor’s degree in Government with a minor in Afro- American Studies from Harvard University. Hord Owens’ resume includes more than 20 years in corporate America leading diverse teams in data management in health care and other industries before she entered seminary.

An active lay leader throughout her youth and adult life, Terri has worked with children and youth ministries, taught Sunday School and Bible study in Christian Education departments, and worked to create drama ministries in several congregations. Despite professional success, she felt God had another assignment, and she accepted her call to ministry under the pastorate of Dr. T. Garrott Benjamin, Jr. at Light of the World Christian Church, Indianapolis, IN. A graduate of University of Chicago Divinity School, Rev. Hord Owens served 15 years as the Dean of Students at her alma matter. Rev. Hord Owens also served as the pastor of First Christian Church of Downers Grove, Illinois, where under her leadership, FCCDG is now an open and affirming, anti-racism, pro-reconciliation congregation. During her pastorate FCCDG nests an independent Hispanic congregation, Fe Y Esperanza, with whom they share in a variety of ministries throughout the year.

Hord Owens is widely sought after as a preacher, speaker and workshop facilitator. Her ministry and intellectual interests include a theology of reconciliation, cultural intelligence, developing inclusive and multi-cultural congregations, and the mentoring of young adults.

Rev. Hord Owens is married to Walter Owens, Jr., and are the proud parents of an adult son, W. Mitchell Owens, III and daughter-in-law Adri Owens and a joyful new grandmother to Zachary.