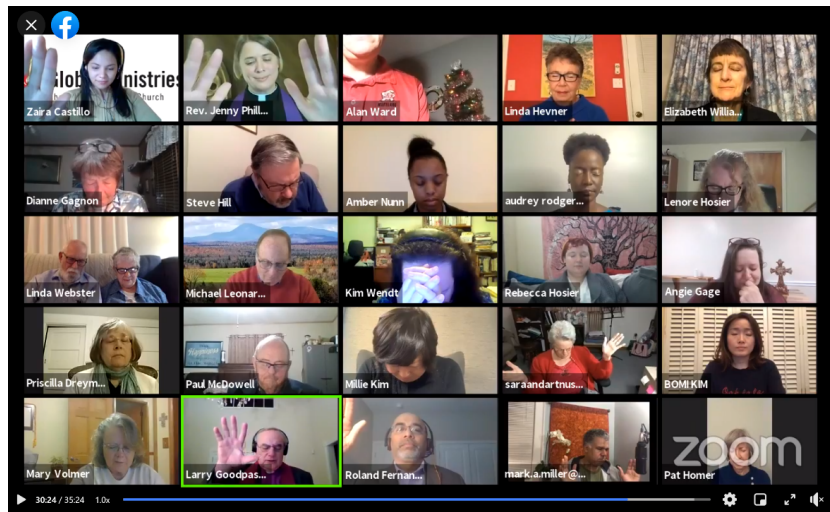


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# Rev. Angie Gage Commissioned as Global Ministries EarthKeeper

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By Caleb Hennington

Digital Content Editor



The Rev. Angie Gage, senior pastor of Cherokee Village UMC, was recently selected to serve in the UMC Global Ministries EarthKeepers program and was commissioned in an online ceremony in December.

According to Global Ministries, the EarthKeepers program trains and supports United Methodist clergy and laity to address environmental concerns on the local level, as well as gives them the knowledge to determine the systemic structures that give rise to those concerns.

It is a direct response to the 2009 Council of Bishops document **"God's Renewed Creation: A Call to Hope and Action,"** which calls for a renewed fight to protect and steward the planet from issues of poverty and disease, environmental degradation, and the proliferation of weapons and violence.

Gage underwent training for the EarthKeepers in November, where candidates discussed eco-theology and entry points into participating in environmental stewardship in their local ministry areas.

"Environmental stewardship is an important mission for United Methodists all over the globe to participate in, and we are blessed to have one of our own pastors representing the Arkansas Conference as an EarthKeeper. I pray for Rev. Angie Gage and her mission of creating a better, more sustainable future for our world," said Bishop Gary Mueller of the Arkansas Conference.

Gage said that every EarthKeeper has a project, and hers will be Growing Community.

"It has several facets to it but begins with the simple idea of a community garden. We will grow a garden while building community with each other. The garden will be in the fenced yard at our parsonage in Cherokee Village," Gage said.

She said this has already been a transformative experience, and she looks forward to her work ahead.

"I didn't realize the spiritual and emotional impact that this has had on me. While being commissioned by Bishop Goodpaster, tears began to flow. The connection I had always felt to God, the Creator; Jesus, the Redeemer; and the Holy Spirit, my Sustainer; as well as my connection to the earth as a Native American all came together. The passion for connection to God through Creation theology, eco-theology, and Native American theology made perfect sense to me.

"I cannot thank God enough for sending me, a not-too-skilled gardener, the challenge to make a difference as an EarthKeeper. I am honored to have been recommended and approved to be a part of this wonderful GBGM community."

Newly selected EarthKeepers were commissioned via a live stream on Dec. 8, 2020.

To watch the commissioning service, visit Global Ministries' Facebook Page at <https://fb.watch/2gF2-KJC5n/>.