



March 2, 2023

RE: Welcoming Event for Bishop Cedrick D. Bridgeforth and Christopher Hucks-Ortiz

Dear Seattle Area Leader,

The Pacific Northwest Conference of The United Methodist Church warmly invites you to a welcoming event for newly assigned Bishop Cedrick D. Bridgeforth and his spouse Christopher Hucks-Ortiz. This meet-and-greet style event will occur on **Saturday, April 1, 2023**, from 2 to 3:30 p.m., at First United Methodist Church in Seattle, Wash. Hors d'oeuvres will be served, and there will be a short program.

An RSVP online at [bit.ly/seattlemeetgreet](https://bit.ly/seattlemeetgreet) or to Kathy Hogg at [khogg@pnwumc.org](mailto:khogg@pnwumc.org) or (206) 870-6834 is requested from you or a person attending on your behalf by Friday, March 24. You are invited to bring a guest; please contact us if your organization wants to bring additional attendees. When you RSVP, please include the number of guests accompanying you.

Bishop Cedrick and Christopher are excited to get to know their fellow leaders and establish connections with the greater community; we hope you will join us! They hope this event will be a first step in joining and forming new coalitions for the common good.

First United Methodist Church is located at 180 Denny Way, Seattle, WA 98109. Public parking is available at the First Church Garage on 2nd and Warren (just past the church on Denny Way); park on or near Level P5 for a quick walk across the alley to the church. *Please note: evening event rates will apply starting at 5:00 pm.*

Elected to the United Methodist episcopacy in November of 2022, Bishop Bridgeforth's first assignment is to the Greater Northwest Area, overseeing more than 400 churches and ministries across Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington, and the southwest part of British Columbia. Christopher Hucks-Ortiz serves as director for HIV, Viral Hepatitis, STIs, and Health Equity at the Washington, D.C.-based Health HIV. Please find their biographies included.

Through its local churches, ministries, and partnerships across the region, the Pacific Northwest Conference of The United Methodist Church is active in addressing the challenges that face our communities today. Whether responding to those impacted by natural disasters and climate change, advocating for social justice, or providing housing or assistance for those living on the economic edge, we are eager partners in service for and with others.

In gratitude for your consideration,

Rev. David Valera  
Exec. Director of Connectional Ministries  
The Pacific Northwest Conference of The United Methodist Church



## **Bishop Cedrick D. Bridgeforth**

**Bishop Cedrick D. Bridgeforth, Ed.D.**, will be assigned as the resident bishop of the Greater Northwest Episcopal Area of The United Methodist Church (UMC) encompassing Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Alaska and a small portion of Canada effective January 1, 2023.

An ordained minister, author, educator, organizational development consultant, public speaker, and the founder of 20/20 Leadership Lessons. He has served as an entrepreneurial coach for nonprofits, before his election. Bridgeforth most recently served as the director of innovation

and communications for the California-Pacific Conference of the (UMC). For over 30 years, Bridgeforth has been a trusted leader, offering his gifts and expertise in various pastoral, administrative, and leadership capacities.

As a spiritual leader, he has served as lead pastor in four congregations in Los Angeles and Orange Counties in California. Those pastorates ranged from predominantly African American congregations in the heart of the Crenshaw District to multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-lingual, and multi-site ministries in the inner-city and suburban sectors of Santa Ana. These pastorates included Grace UMC Los Angeles (2018-2021), Santa Ana UMC (2015-2017), Crenshaw UMC (2003-2008), and Bowen Memorial UMC (1999-2003).

For eight years (2008-2015), he served as a district superintendent and dean of the cabinet in the California-Pacific Conference (Los Angeles and West Districts), one of the most diverse regions in United Methodism with language and cultural ministries from over twenty regions of the world. The geography spanned coastal, mountain, rural, and desert communities.

Within the Methodist Church, he has been a candidacy mentor for those discerning a call to ministry and a supervising elder for those in the provisional and full connection review processes. He was elected a clergy delegate to general and jurisdictional conferences in 2008, 2012, 2016, 2019, and 2020. In 2016, 2019, and 2020, he was the first elected clergy delegate for the California-Pacific Conference. Those elections led him to serve on the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits (now Wespeth) and as a member of the Western Jurisdiction's committee on nominations.

From 2013 to 2016, Bridgeforth served as president of Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR) and co-convener of the Inter-Ethnic Strategy Development Group.

Along with service in the UMC, Bridgeforth began work as a course instructor at the University of La Verne's Ecumenical Center for Black Church Studies in 2003. In 2016, he was named director of academic programs and outreach. During this time, he taught courses, led workshops,

updated policies, recruited faculty, consulted on core curriculum, and created the framework for a community-based lay and clergy continuing education program.

Bridgeforth is the founder of 20/20 Leadership Lessons, Inc. Through 20/20 Leadership Lessons, he provides coaching for clergy and non-profit leaders and consultations for nonprofit leaders, organizations, and their boards on policies, structures, and behaviors that lead to vitality and efficiency.

A native of Decatur, Alabama, Bridgeforth is a U.S. Air Force veteran who earned a bachelor's degree in religion from Samford University, a master of divinity degree from the Claremont School of Theology (CST), and an educational doctorate in organizational leadership from Pepperdine University. He is the author of *Alabama Grandson: A Black, Gay Minister's Passage Out of Hiding, Thoughts and Prayers*, and *20/20 Leadership Lessons: Seeing Visions and Focusing on Reality*. Along with appointments to local church contexts, he also worked at his alma mater CST, as an admissions counselor and as director of alumni and church relations.

Bridgeforth is a life member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., a Harry Hoosier member of BMCR, International Coaching Federation, Methodist Museum for Social Justice, spiritual advisor for Strength for the Journey HIV Camp, and participant with L.A. Veterans Collaborative and U.S. Vets. In June, he completed the AIDS/LifeCycle, a 545-mile bike ride from San Francisco to Los Angeles.

As a nonprofit leader and consultant, he is passionate about a wide range of social justice issues, including restorative justice, homelessness, and hunger. He has successfully restructured complex organizations to meet the current and future challenges of fulfilling their ongoing mission, building upon organizational values through purposeful listening to constituent groups and data gathering. He has led these organizations to create consensus around a renewed vision, innovative program areas, and building the financial strength, organizational processes, and teams to support them.

Bridgeforth is married to Christopher Hucks-Ortiz. Hucks-Ortiz is a public health and research professional with demonstrated leadership in the U.S. domestic and global field of infectious disease focused on HIV/AIDS, substance abuse, STIs, and Hepatitis prevention and intervention. He has successfully secured public funds to support research and health programs targeting key vulnerable populations. They reside in Los Angeles.

###



## Christopher Hucks-Ortiz

***Christopher Hucks-Ortiz, MPH***, is Director, HIV, Viral Hepatitis, STIs, and Health Equity for the Washington, D.C. based Health HIV. He is responsible to address the unmet capacity building needs of the public health and healthcare workforce (HIV prevention, care & treatment, viral hepatitis, sexually transmitted disease and infection, harm reduction, and health equity).

Prior to Health HIV, he was the Director of HIV and Clinical Services for the Black AIDS Institute (BAI), the nation's only HIV/AIDS organization dedicated to ending the epidemic in Black communities. In this role, he was responsible for implementing and expanding BAI's direct service work and ensuring that all clinics, HIV prevention and linkage to care programming, and partnerships run efficiently and effectively. He also led the development of a successful HIV & Tobacco Control Policy Research Center as the lead Administrative Principal Investigator [\$2,000,000 award over 4 years].

Hucks-Ortiz is the former Manager over the Social Services Division at the Dignity Health - St. Mary Medical Center CARE Clinic where he managed all social services programming to help address structural and social determinants of health that impact the lives of people living with HIV or vulnerable to HIV acquisition. He has over 20 years of experience in the design, implementation, and evaluation of HIV prevention, treatment, and substance abuse services. He also has a very strong background in the ethical conduct of clinical trials (HIV and others) and ensuring culturally competent research design for racial, ethnic, sexual minority, and other disenfranchised populations.

Hucks-Ortiz earned a bachelors of health science degree from California State University, Los Angeles (CSULA) with an emphasis in community health education, and a master of public health from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) with an emphasis in community health. Recently, he also completed a certificate program in Diversity and Inclusion from Cornell University, New York.

Hucks-Ortiz also provides community consultation to Investigators within the NIH-funded HIV research networks: HIV Prevention Trials Network (HPTN), HIV Vaccine Trials Network (HVTN), AIDS Clinical Trials Group (ACTG) and a host of several other agencies. Within the HPTN, he serves as current chair of the Black Caucus, is an active member of the Community Working Group where he is also a member of the Steering Committee and the Community Representative to the HPTN Science Review Committee. He has been involved in a variety of clinical trials within these networks. In addition, Hucks-Ortiz also serves as a member of the HIV/AIDS Network Coordination (HANC) Legacy Project Working Group which advocates for greater inclusion of racial, ethnic, and disenfranchised populations into clinical trials. Hucks-Ortiz also consults with other researchers to ensure cultural capacity of community-based research for African American and Hispanic/Latino populations.

Hucks-Ortiz is a member of the American Public Health Association (APHA), and a number of local research advisory groups (HIV/AIDS, nutrition, and other determinants of health).

Huck-Ortiz is married to the Rev. Dr. Cedrick Bridgeforth an ordained United Methodist minister, author, educator, executive coach, consultant, public speaker, and the founder of 20/20 Leadership Lessons. They reside in Los Angeles.

###