

REV. TERRI HORD OWENS

Rev. Terri Hord Owens is a native of Terre Haute, IN, and a descendant of one of Indiana's oldest African-American free settlements. She earned her bachelor's degree in Government with a minor in Afro-American Studies from Harvard University. Terri began her professional career in the area of information technology, spending 23 years in the area of management consulting, data management and data warehousing. She previously held senior management positions with IBM, Ernst & Young, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield, and SBC, consistently earning recognition for excellence and leadership. 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.

Rev. Owens earned the Master of Divinity degree at the University of Chicago Divinity School, where she was a Disciples Divinity House Scholar, and recipient of the John Gray Rhind Award, given to the top M.Div graduate at the Divinity School. She was ordained at Light of the World Christian Church, wearing the robe of her paternal grandfather, the late Rev. Noel Hord. In August of 2005, she was appointed Dean of Students at the University of Chicago Divinity School, where she is responsible for administration and development of academic policy, student advising on personal matters, students' academic progress, admissions and financial aid, recruiting, and PhD student professionalization and placement. She is a member of the Divinity School's Diversity Committee, and the University's Diversity Leadership Council. She manages the programming of diversity and inclusion events within the Divinity School and is regularly engaged in this work across campus. Because of her previous professional experience, she also serves on the Student Health Insurance Policy Oversight Committee, and the Data Stewardship Committee. She also represents the Divinity School on the boards of both the Hispanic Summer Program and the Hispanic Theological Initiative, programs focused on providing support for Hispanic students in master's and doctoral theological education.

Alongside her work at the Divinity School, Terri serves as Senior Minister at First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Downers Grove, IL. She is the first person of color to serve as pastor of this predominantly white congregation. A small congregation with a large heart to serve and give, FCCDG's ministry reaches to the homeless in DuPage County, as well as families with children in the surrounding area. Each year, the church hosts a Back-to-School Fair, serving nearly 800 people each year. In addition to school supplies, the church offers a fun afternoon of food, games, hair cuts, health assessments—all at no cost to needy families. The church also supports the Isle of Hope Camp and orphanage in Belarus, which ministers to children affected by the aftermath of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. FCCDG also supports local service ministries such as LOVE Christian Clearinghouse, Hope's Front Door, FISH food pantry, and its members are active across the Chicagoland area in a variety of service agencies/ministries. Unity, liberty and love are the core values of this congregation that seeks to be the presence of Christ in the community. Under Rev. Owens' leadership, FCCDG is now an open and affirming, anti-racism, pro-reconciliation congregation. FCCDG also nests an independent Hispanic congregation, Fe Y Esperanza, with whom they share in a variety of ministries throughout the year.

Rev. Owens is a member of the Board of Trustees at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis and serves as Secretary of the Board. She also serves on the Board of Directors for the Higher Education and Leadership Ministries (HELM) of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). She is a founding member of the Advisory Board for the Center for the Study of Black Faith and Life at Chicago Theological Seminary in Chicago. She is also active in denominational work at the regional and national level of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Over the years, she has leveraged her executive management experience as an initial

screening of applications for several executive searches for general units of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and two regional minister searches. She served on the IT Advisory Committee for the Pension Fund during its recent systems upgrade to provide online member access. Rev. Owens was honored to be the preacher for the opening worship service at the 2015 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in July 2015.

Rev. 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 youth and young adults. She is married to Walter Owens, Jr., with whom she will soon celebrate 30 years of marriage. They are the proud parents of an adult son, W. Mitchell Owens, III.