

M. GARLINDA BURTON

104 Fitzpatrick Court
Nashville, Tennessee 37214

ph. (615) 497-1398
gburton@gcorr.org

M. GARLINDA BURTON, a United Methodist deaconess, is director of resource development for the **General Commission on Religion and Race** of the United Methodist Church. This denominational agency advocates for dismantling institutional and systemic racism and tribalism in church and society. Before taking that post, she served as Executive Director for the **Nashville Freedom School Partnership**®, a literacy/enrichment program for under-served children of color, created by the Children's Defense Fund in Washington, D.C.

Ms. Burton frequently leads spiritual life retreats and offers motivational presentations and anti-racism coaching for faith-based organizations, civic agencies, colleges and universities, and social-action groups. She has worked for the international agencies of the United Methodist Church for 42 years. From 2003 to 2012, she was CEO of the Chicago-based **General Commission on the Status and Role of Women**, one of the Church's 12 international general agencies. As head of the commission, Ms. Burton worked with lay and clergywomen to foster leadership and advocacy skills; challenged church leaders to identify and confront institutional sexism; trained church leaders on how to address sexual misconduct and gender discrimination; advocated for full inclusion of women's leadership, with a particular focus on the concerns of women of color and churchwomen beyond the United States.

Before coming to the Women's Commission, Ms. Burton was editor of *INTERPRETER*, a national affinity magazine for laypeople and pastors in U.S. United Methodist churches. She also served as director of **United Methodist News Service** and as editorial director for the denomination's Korean magazine, Spanish-language magazine and official churchwide calendar.

Ms. Burton has traveled throughout southern Africa, Latin America, the Philippines and Europe as a writer, trainer and lecturer, and frequently leads retreats and training at the local, regional, national and international level.

Ms. Burton is a specialist in racial, gender, and class issues in the media, academia, church and corporate life, and she frequently conducts training for media professionals, educators, businesses and church leaders on combating sexism, classism, racism and heterosexism/homophobia. Her first book, an anti-racism study guide, was published in 1995. She contributed a chapter to the book, *Holy Contradictions: What's Next for The People Called United Methodists*, has written for *Response* magazine, *UMMen's* magazine, and curriculum for the United Methodist Publishing House. She writes and edits books and articles. Ms. Burton has also published a booklet on body image for teenage girls and contributed to a book of meditations and reflections for mothers and stepmoms.

Ms. Burton earned undergraduate and masters' degrees from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville and Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill. She did additional graduate work through the Wichita (Kan.) State University, and New York Theological Seminary. She is both a member of the Board of Visitors and a field-education supervisor at Vanderbilt Divinity School in Nashville and she serves as secretary of the board of directors of the Wesley Foundation at Tennessee State University in Nashville. She is also a member of the Metropolitan Nashville Human Relations Commission, and a past member of the Nashville Mayor's Task Force on Gender Justice, the Reconciling Ministries network, and the FaithTrust Institute.

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