

Congratulations to our clergy who were commissioned and ordained during Annual Conference

Commissioned:

Quinn Scott Peters (Elder) & Dayimi Pimentel (Elder)

Ordained:

Sarah Barnett (Elder)
Kate Flint (Deacon)
Donyale Fraylon (Elder)
Russell LaGrone (Deacon)
Katie Montgomery Mears (Elder)
Lataya Simpson (Elder)
Stephanie Wilkins (Deacon)

Daniel Hernandez (recognition of orders) (Elder)

Be Very Careful About Classifying Church Workers as Independent Contractors

A series of changes regarding the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) by the US Department of Labor (DOL) during the first half of 2021 has made the task of determining minimum wage and overtime pay requirements for church employees difficult to do. The latest change came on May 6, 2021, and church leaders should take note—or else face potentially costly penalties and even legal action, warns attorney Richard Hammar in a new article on Church Law & Tax.

On May 6, the DOL withdrew the Independent Contractor Rule, which was adopted in early January by the Trump administration. The rule had “generally made it easier for employers to classify workers as contractors rather than employees, thereby relieving employers of the need to comply with the FLSA,” explains Hammar. With the rule withdrawn, though, the FLSA again applies more broadly, meaning churches must now be more “cautious in treating any worker as an exempt independent contractor,” Hammar says.

Grace and peace,



[Chris Lutes](#)

Web Editor, ChurchLawAndTax.com

That Time and That Season

"For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven." On the Texas Gulf Coast, June 1st and November 30th mark the beginning and end of the time we call Hurricane season. Hurricanes can be fickle. Sometimes we get several days' notice before landfall, sometimes not so much. Storms are notorious for strengthening and weakening, turning east and west, speeding up, slowing down, and stalling. As God's children, we pray. As Texans, we prepare.



Personal Preparation: Now is the time for us to prepare for what forecasters expect to be an active season. Checklists are everywhere. We need to review our risk, develop an evacuation plan, and assemble disaster supplies. We strengthen our homes and get an insurance checkup. We look after neighbors who may need our help and top off our car's gas tanks while still half full. We know that the consequences of not being prepared are long lines at best and hardship at worst.

Church Preparation: It is also a time for our churches to prepare. Trustees attend to the building and insurance coverage. When a storm approaches, we secure the building and send staff home to be safe with their families. But is that enough? Are our Congregations ready for the storm?

Congregational Preparation: After Harvey, our members showed the nation what it means to be the people of God when we responded in force to answer our neighbors' calls. Thanks to His generosity, we found ourselves with the people, materials, and funds required to help our neighbors recover. No one could fault our enthusiasm to share God's love for all by mucking and gutting strangers' homes. Still, we wondered if we could do better.

Harvey showed us that we were not as prepared as we could have been. Teams often showed up early in the morning to serve and discovered a home that had been mucked and gutted the day before. Yet, in other neighborhoods, flood-damaged houses went untouched for months and years. We had no plan for how we would learn the condition of the most vulnerable in our communities. We didn't all have the right tools or the proper training or a well-thought-out plan to respond. Lacking these, some of our well-intentioned teams made the survivors' paths to full recovery more difficult.

The Texas Annual Conference and Texas Congregational Disaster Readiness want to help your Church be prepared to help after the storm. Harvey taught us that communication, coordination, and execution are the most powerful predictors of success in disaster response. We believe that our churches working hand in hand with Congregations of other faiths can make a difference. We see a faith community serving and sharing the love of God with survivors by sheltering those who have no shelter, mucking and gutting homes for those who have no help, and providing food, diapers, and cleaning supplies to those who have none.

Your Congregation can be a part of the story that will unfold after the next storm. Appoint a Disaster Readiness Coordinator (DRC) and an Assistant DRC today. Discover the gifts of disaster response that God has planted in your Congregation. Recruit, train, and equip response teams to help your neighbors. Work with other Congregations to ensure that every member of our community who needs help gets it by purposefully looking for those who need help. Together we can craft a testimony of what it means to be God's people in the world.

For more information, contact Godfrey Hubert @ gghubert@txcumc.org. We look forward to welcoming your Church to the team!

Gary Flaharty, Author



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TESTIMONY HQ

The Community Needs Your Story

SMU PERKINS SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Is Your Church Ready to Thrive?

Look to SMU Perkins Newest Grant Initiative: Testimony HQ

Funded by a grant from the Lilly Endowment and housed at Perkins School of Theology, [Testimony HQ](#) is a new program dedicated to teaching congregations how to foster and incorporate testimony as a means of community engagement. Any church located within a [350-mile radius of Dallas](#) ready to devote an entire year to developing and growing the practice of testimony as a way to build connection within congregations — and beyond — is invited to apply for a space in the first cohort of 10 churches.

Learn what Testimony HQ is all about

Join us for a 30-minute Zoom information session about Testimony HQ on Friday, June 18, 9:30 AM CST. [RSVP](#) to our team to receive the Zoom link. In the meantime, [visit our website](#) to find out more, because **the community needs your story.**

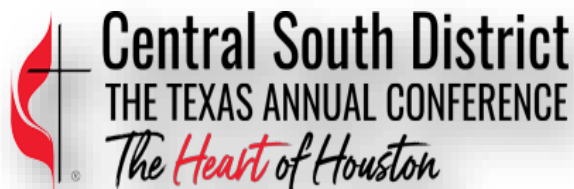


Farewell

Our office assistant Sara Hinshaw-Hatten will be leaving us this week. Help me wish Sara a fond farewell as she begins the next phase of her journey. We hate to see her leave, but we are thankful for the time she has worked with the Central South District and we wish her the best.

In Person Worship

Pastors, please email the office at csdistrict@txcumc.org and let us know when you will resume in person worship. If you are not sure if you have sent the information, check the list on the website @ <https://csdistrict.org/district-churches#ecd6f253-1f7a-41e6-a794-f3950aea70f5>. We want to let our community know when our churches are back in person, or you can share your live stream links for the list.



CENTRAL SOUTH DISTRICT OF THE TEXAS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Rev. Dr. Elijah A. Stansell, Jr. – District Superintendent
Ms. Marylyn Green – District Administrator

3511 Linkwood Dr. • Houston, TX 77025
(inside the former Bethany United Methodist Church)
713-222-0117 • Email: csdistrict@txcumc.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/heartofhouston> Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/csd_umc/