

**THE RIVERSIDE CHURCH**  
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

**2017 Candidates**  
*for*  
**Lay Leadership**



Listen to interviews with the nominees at [www.spreaker.com/show/welcome-to-riverside](http://www.spreaker.com/show/welcome-to-riverside)

**CHURCH COUNCIL** ..... 1-9

<i>Kenitra Boone</i>	<i>Len Leach</i>	<i>Christian Rojas</i>
<i>Mary Biggs</i>	<i>Lakeisha McCoy</i>	<i>Philip Salmon</i>
<i>Robert Carpenter</i>	<i>Marilyn Mitchell</i>	<i>Howard Sanders</i>
<i>Barbara L. Hampton</i>	<i>Patrick Mouton</i>	<i>Jean Schmidt</i>
<i>Lauren Hepburn</i>	<i>Rick O'Keefe</i>	<i>Sandy Thomas</i>
<i>Jacqueline Hopkins</i>		

**EDUCATION COMMISSION** ..... 10-11

*Eugene A. Melino*  
*Pamela Palanque North*  
*John Slorance*

**MEMBERSHIP, CARE, & PARISH LIFE COMMISSION** ..... 12-17

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<i>Dana Ferguson-Moss</i>	<i>Gregory Muniz</i>
<i>Eldonia (Elaine) Goode</i>	<i>Edward L. Roberts</i>
<i>Jerome Hairston</i>	<i>Vanessa Wilkinson</i>
<i>David Jenson</i>	<i>Rosalyn Witter</i>

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<i>James Litkett</i>	<i>Forrest R. Taylor</i>
<i>Douglas E. Miller</i>	<i>Henry Williams</i>

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*Irene Ryan King*  
*Linda LeShanna*  
*Karen McVoy*  
*Iniva Ngaka*

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*Samuel Coleman*  
*Shelly Ellis Herrington*  
*Karen Mott*

Plan to reset the 3-year rotational pattern of terms for elected lay leaders: The Riverside Church by-laws state that members of the Church Council, Commissions and Committees serve in a 3-year rotational pattern. Over the years, that pattern has deteriorated, so the Nominating Committee proposed a plan to re-establish the terms of service. The Church Council has approved this plan, which will be implemented for elections in May 2017: Candidates elected to the Membership Care, & Parish Life Commission (MCPL), Church Council, Worship Commission and the Nominating Committee will receive three-, two-, or one-year terms, determined by the number of votes each candidate receives - candidates who receive the highest number of votes receive the longer term.



# CHURCH COUNCIL

8 openings

*Kenitra Boone  
Mary Biggs  
Robert Carpenter  
Barbara L. Hampton  
Lauren Hepburn  
Jacqueline Hopkins  
Len Leach  
Lakeisha McCoy*

*Marilyn Mitchell  
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## **Mary Biggs**

Active in Maranatha since joining Riverside, I am presently its co-Convener. I founded and formerly Convened the Riverside Book Club; served on the Education Commission and Budget and Planning Committee; and have volunteered in several other ministries. I am also active in numerous secular organizations which serve

children and youth, and the LGBT community.

Through service to education and the fight for social justice, I have found myself as a spiritual person and mapped a life direction that, I pray, is leading me toward worthiness and fulfillment as a Christian. In this journey, Riverside is my guide and Riversiders are my inspirations. Having acquired a broad perspective on the church through service that traverses many ministries and functions, I feel qualified to contribute to Council, which would give me the responsibility and honor of serving the entire church: One Riverside.



## Kenitra Boone

I currently sit on the Membership and Parish Life Commission. I have volunteered with new members for over three years. I work in development at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and love reading and music. My knowledge in development will be beneficial as a member of the Council. My commitment to God and The Riverside Church has “called” me to seek this position. Being a member of a Congregational church encourages me to learn, support and nourish the congregation in positive ways. It is important to ensure that our membership is represented and heard, as Lay Leaders that is our responsibility. I love The Riverside Church and the amazing relationships I have created as a member and Lay Leader here. Lay Leadership is a form of worship that will allow me to not only develop a closer relationship with the church and it’s members, most of all a closer relationship with God.



## Robert Carpenter

I have felt a calling to serve God in some way all my life. It began in Philadelphia, where I was an acolyte from age five through high school. Later, I participated in national Episcopal youth conferences, served on the New York Diocesan Council and was a Cathedral of St. John the Divine trustee for many years. In the eighties, I was a lay reader, communion server and adult Bible study leader, at my local parish. Now at Riverside since 1996, I have responded to my call in a number of ways and today, through service with the Council, I further seek to use my organizational know-how to that end.

I believe my Columbia MBA degree, two decades of experience as a U.S. Air Force officer and in the computer sales field, and experience as a self-employed consultant, who has helped improve the interpersonal skills of leaders and managers worldwide for over 20 years, have prepared me to contribute in this capacity, and I earnestly wish to do so.



## Barbara L. Hampton

Having served in regional, national, and international organizations as presiding officer or member of executive boards, I bring the experience of effective policy-making with diverse colleagues and serving constituencies diverse in terms of ethnicity, nationality, gender/sexuality, language and ideas/ perspectives.



My service on the Riverside Communion Preparation and Cleanup Teams, Music Committee, and the Worship Commission began when international, interdenominational, and being welcoming were significant attributes of our outreach. At the dawn of a new era in this nation these ideals remain as important as ever. I wish to actively serve the mission of The Riverside Church on the Council and feel called by the letter of Peter, the Apostle, to early West Asian churches that contemporaneously suffered severe persecution: “Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace“ (1 Peter 4:10).



## Lauren Hepburn

Member since 2002, I was drawn to the diversity and fellowship of the Riverside Church. It has been a blessing to serve. Key successes during my 1st term in Church Council include my contributions on the Stewardship, Audit, and Building Committees. I received a Bachelors’ Degree in Accounting from Pace University in

New York City. My career began as an accountant with Deloitte with investment banking clients. For over 15 years, I have worked with corporate clients. In addition, I enjoy helping individuals build savings and reduce debt working with Primerica Financial Services. My goals for the Church Council are to encourage unity as one Church Family. I am a native New Yorker living in nearby Washington Heights. I was raised in Queens in a family with strong Christian values and community service. My leisure activities include crochet, working out, and spending time with friends and family.



## Jacqueline Hopkins

I have been a member of Riverside since 2004. I volunteered as a Sunday School Teacher from 2004-2005, became a member of the College and Young Adults Ministry in 2005, was the leader of that ministry from 2010 to 2015, and have served on the Church Council from 2014-Present. I have also served on the Audit Committee since 2016 and the By-Laws Committee since 2017.



I hold a Master's degree in Language and Literacy and have more than 15 years of supervisory experience in education programs. My husband, Rueben Martinez, and I were married in the Nave in 2009.

I feel called by the Lord to serve as a lay leader in this wonderful church.

## Len Leach

I previously served on the Church Council during difficult and optimistic times. Leadership is an opportunity of personal growth, giving back to the church that has provided so much to me and to be able to work alongside the staff and congregation to make positive changes.



After leaving the Council, I continue to serve on the Sharing Fund. I started my own technology firm after leaving the council and this has continue to strengthen my leadership skills which I will bring to the Church Council.



## Lakeisha McCoy

Riverside Church is steeped in the pursuit of social justice, inclusion, diversity and religious and spiritual exploration and understanding. It is a beacon of hope with global reach. I can attest to how Riverside's values – practiced consistently – have completely transformed my relationship with God and deepened my humanity.



I seek a Church Council position because I would like to leverage my business, strategy and education talents to help Riverside set a course that will continue to expand its reach to communities and persons hungry to know and experience God, in this time of deep uncertainty. At Riverside, I've been an usher, a volunteer with the food drive, stand-in lay leader for Morning Light and most recently, Open Bible Study coordinator. Accepting God's call enables me to continue to grow in compassion, love, understanding, patience and humility as I help serve the needs of our local and global communities.



## Marilyn Mitchell

My calling to serve comes directly from the teachings of Christ: "You can tell what they are by what they do" (Matthew 7:16). I am running for a seat on the Church Council because I want to work in fellowship with other congregants who are dedicated to the theology and social justice legacy of The Riverside Church. I want to be a part of a church that models Christ's welcoming love. I think the church can truly fulfill its mandate, its ministry mission, when Church Council responsibly manages the physical plant, the finances and participates in the strategic plans

for the church's future. I also bring my years of professional expertise in the areas of managing people, budgets and a decision making role in the direction of my company's IT department. From the time my son and I joined Riverside, we committed to working and serving the TRC community. I have served in various capacities as a multiple year volunteer to Career Day and the scholarship committee, as a church school teacher, on the Senior Minister Search Committee, and on both the Education Commission and the Church Council. Some of my most rewarding moments have been serving as a Riverside tour guide; it is through this service that I'm able to tell Christ's story through the lens of Riverside Church from its progressive architecture to its history of committed progressive service. Riverside is a haven for people who feel marginalized or who want to commit to social justice or who are inspired by the various choirs we have. I have a degree in early childhood education and a Masters in Political Science which has led me into managing a corporate training department focused on adults. I am truly blessed to have my faith as the center of my entire life.



## Patrick Mouton

I served 7 years on the B&P committee. During my tenure the church moved towards a healthier way to manage its budget and finances. I also learned a lot about the organization. In 2012/2013, I chaired the sub-committee for the revision of the Authorized Spending Rule which recommended a mid-term objective of withdrawing no more than 5% of the portfolio per year.



As a professional, I was CFO of Action Against Hunger. I am now the controller of International AIDS Vaccine Initiative. My financial expertise in the not-for-profit world would be an asset within the Church Council, especially at this time when the organization is going through important structural changes with significant financial implications. I love the Riverside Church and especially the people who make it.

Serving on the Church Council would be the greatest honor and the best way for me to keep growing spiritually in the body of Christ.



## Rick O'Keefe

I am family physician and work at Health Services where I care for the students of the Morningside campus of Columbia University. During my career, I have developed programs to care for marginalized adolescents in school-based and street settings and have worked on numerous boards. I am a bee keeper and live in Harlem with my partner, John.

I joined Riverside in 2003. I attended service and slowly began to serve in lay leadership. I have served as treasurer of the Sharing Fund, member of the Design Team which helped develop recommendations for the council to navigate conflict in our church, and most recently, as chair of the Nominating Committee. In all these roles, I have been inspired by the creativity and passion of my fellow committee members, elected lay and pastoral leaders. Through our collaboration on Nominating, we attempted to streamline and demystify the election cycle at Riverside and open the process of nominations and voting to as many Riverside members as possible. After a year break, I would welcome the opportunity to serve our community in a new capacity as a member of the council. I would hope to continue helping us reach forward and invigorate our congregation's involvement in our great church.



## Christian Rojas

Almost 100 years ago, Harry Emerson Fosdick asked, “Shall the Fundamentalists Win?” With this question as relevant as ever, I want today’s Riverside to be a brightly shining example of the “intellectually hospitable, tolerant, liberty-loving church” that Fosdick advocated: a community strong in spirit and action, centered on Jesus’s radical message of love for God, neighbor, stranger, and enemy.



I served on Church Council in 2015-2016 and am on the Nominating Committee this year. I was co-convener of the search committee that presented Pastor Amy to the congregation. During the two-year search process, I grew in spirit along with the eleven other members of the committee as we heard Riversiders’ aspirations for the future of our church.

As a professor at Barnard College, I teach and do research in organic chemistry. I have served in leadership positions at the department and college levels and am committed to collaborative decision making.



## Philip Salmon

The Parable of the Talents teaches us to use our talents not for ourselves, but to honor God. We are servants of the Lord entrusted with the prudent stewardship of His resources. I am called to use my extensive business and nonprofit background to help our beloved Riverside community grow in Christian faith while judiciously utilizing His resources.

Riverside holds a special place in my heart.

I’ve been a member for over 15 years and the Nave has served as a place of worship and memories including my wedding and the baptism of my Daughter, Jessye. My lay leadership experience includes current and past service on: Budget and Planning Committee, Treasurer, Greeting Ministry, Stewardship Committee and Sustainability Committee. Not only does my love for Riverside qualifies me to serve in this capacity, but I am a CPA, an MBA, and I bring over 20 years of Fortune 50 and nonprofit experience. I am currently a CFO of a 360 student Charter school where I have direct responsibility for finance, accounting, human resources, development and the after-school program.

I hope to continue the work we have begun and move our church forward for the next generation.



## Howard Sanders

My “calling” hasn’t “involved blinding illuminations” to quote the HBO Series *The Young Pope*. I, quite simply, have had a set of experiences as an entrepreneur and finance professional that enable me to serve God’s People at this moment particularly well. I have sat on the Council and experienced the challenges brought before it in each meeting. To make progress, the group must achieve a level of interconnectedness and selflessness which is rare- even for Christians. I seek to be part of this monthly communion. Hopefully, I can help in restoring some of stability TRC enjoyed for so many years.



I am a Harlem native who served one-term previously on Riverside’s Church Council. I have been most active on the Finance and Audit Committees which oversee the Church’s endowment and outside annual audits. I also serves as a member of the Church’s Sustainability Committee. I became active at Riverside in 2005 when my children Hannah and Samantha started attending Riverside Sunday Church School. Professionally I am the Founder and Managing Partner of Auldbrass Partners, a private equity firm based in New York that manages and advises on over \$1.1 billion in assets. Before founding Auldbrass Partners, I was a Managing Director at Citigroup where I co-led the divestment of \$3.5bn in alternatives from Citi Holdings balance sheet following the financial crisis of 2008/9. Prior to Citi Holdings, I led private investments for Citigroup’s \$13bn global pension funds. Educationally, I have an MBA from Harvard University and a BS from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. I have also served as an Adjunct Professor at Columbia Business School.

## Jean Schmidt



I am currently serving on the Church Council and am Chair of Budget & Planning. I previously served on Church Council (2006-2012), as Chair, Vice Chair, and Chair of Budget & Planning. I also am on the Sustainability Task Force, serve as a member of the Greeter Ministry, and volunteer at food drive and Career Day. I am a partner in the law firm of Littler Mendelson, specializing in employment law and litigation representing employers. I serve on the Board of the Kappa Kappa Gamma Foundation

which provides scholarships, emergency aid and leadership training for women, and am currently the Treasurer. I love sports and am a New York Liberty season ticket holder.

It has been an honor and privilege for me to work with the other Council members, Pastor Amy and the senior staff the past three years and to be part of the revitalization of our Congregation. I would like the opportunity to continue the work we have begun. While we have made progress in better managing our financial resources and reducing or reliance on the portfolio, there is much work to be done if we are to achieve sustainability both financially and programmatically. I want to be part of this important effort, and believe I can contribute because of my previous experience on Council and B&P and my familiarity with the Church’s finances, structure, programs and staff, along with my experience with major fund raising and development. Being able to serve as a lay leader enriches me in so many ways and gives me the opportunity to feel a real part of and contribute to Riverside’s mission.



## Sandy Thomas

I feel God is calling me to use my professional skills and spiritual gifts at The Riverside Church. After retiring in 2013, as Vice President of Global Girl Scouting and Strategic Alliances, I asked God to show me the road ahead. I have tried to be patient during “the wait” but know “you can’t hurry God.”



My enriching 40 year career with Girl Scouts of the USA, as well as my extensive involvement in community organizations, have blessed me with numerous opportunities to share my skills in leadership, organizational effectiveness, and volunteer management. I have been a deacon, elder, trustee, and on the personnel committee in my former churches.

I currently serve on the Ordination Committee and am a member of the Inspirational Choir at Riverside. After much consideration and prayer, I feel my skills and expertise would best be put to use on the Church Council. I know this experience will give me the opportunity to continue my spiritual growth and renewal.



# EDUCATION

3 openings

*Eugene A. Melino*  
*Pamela Palanque North*  
*John Slorance*

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## **Eugene Melino**

“God is light” (1 John 1:5).

My candidacy for Education Commission is my answer to God’s call to use my gifts and experience to help Riverside bring the light to our community and our nation in a dark time. I currently serve on the Ordination Committee (2015 to

present). My past experience includes serving as Secretary of the Senior Minister Search Committee that called Pastor Amy (2012-2014), Chair of the Adult Christian Education Committee (2008-2012) and Mission Coordinator for Mobilization 2004. I earned my graduate and undergraduate degrees at NYU, where I majored in English education.

For over ten years, I’ve led small group and open Bible study classes, including “God Is One: Introduction to Islam for Non-Muslims,” which I will reprise this spring. But my first love will always be leading introduction to the Bible, where I’ve witnessed the spiritually wounded heal and fellowship begin.



## Pamela Palanque North

My interest in serving as a member of the Education Commission is to serve and support the learning needs of our congregation and the extended community. As a long time professor invested in teaching and learning, I hope that these skills and experiences will assist me to contribute and support our faith community by creating and facilitating enriching learning experiences that lead to greater spirituality and wholeness.



Serving as a lay leadership greatly enhances my own spirituality by helping through service, reflection and renewal. For the past three years, I have had the honor of serving on the Education Commission and as its Vice Chair. I am very pleased and proud to have introduced the concept of having a Freedom School to the Commission in 2014. I have been thrilled to witness education clergy transform this concept and model into a highly successful program.

My career as an organization psychologist and educator has helped me to support the commission as we evolve into a high functioning group that is supportive of our mission and each other as well. As a former chair and now member of a Northern Manhattan Community Board, a founding member of the MET Museum of Art Multicultural Trustee Advisory Board, as well as leadership roles in other NFP and civic groups, I am able to support the Commission and church to reach a broader audience and access a range of resources as well. It has been my pleasure to support TRC for I have reaped full spiritual benefit in this role of service as well!



## John Slorance

I would like to be a part of the great work that the Rev. Kevin Wright is doing in the Education Ministry. I would like to be on the Education Commission so I can contribute to the administrative work that the Education Ministry is doing. Being on the Education Commission will get me more involved with the work of the church.

I am an usher, I volunteer on the food drives, I sing in the Inspirational Choir, I was on the Nominating Committee for six years and the Membership and Parish Life Commission for six years.

I am in the 3 Parks Independent Democrats political club and I can inform members of the church about local community activities. I am an executive secretary at work and I have administrative skills that I can bring to the Education Commission.



# MEMBERSHIP, CARE, & PARISH LIFE

11 openings

*Isabel Bogdan*

*Dana Ferguson-Moss*

*Eldonia (Elaine) Goode*

*Jerome Hairston*

*David Jensen*

*Kurt Karandy*

*Gregory Muniz*

*Edward L. Roberts*

*Vanessa Wilkinson*

*Rosalyn Witter*

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## **Isabel Bogdan**

My spiritual journey involves establishing a relationship with others, helping with the growth of the church and reaching out to new members, specifically new mothers and women in the church.

I have been growing with the assistance of other members and would like to continue the chain. I have also participated in Sunday school activities and would like to continue with bible study lessons for our community.

I am a Nurse Practitioner with a specialty in women's health with a focus on family.



## Dana Ferguson-Moss

With a traditional church upbringing, it wasn't long after moving to New York before I began "church shopping." By my third year however, I'd become a professional nomad and my rootlessness was a breeding ground for spiritual discomfort. Of the (many!) things I missed, I longed to walk into a sanctuary where someone knew my name. Where I mattered. Where I belonged.



The Riverside Church reignited my desire to be used to answer prayers I once prayed. Singing with the Inspirational Choir, cooking meals for the Coming Home program and small group meditation are some of the contributions I weave into our tapestry of intergenerational ministry. I believe the fulfillment of God's radical work requires all hands on deck and as a qualified Barrister and artist, I'm excited to use my gifts and unique young adult perspective to advocate for the progress and continued development of new members in our faith community.



## Eldonia (Elaine) Goode

I want to help the Membership, Care, & Parish Life Commission provide a smooth spiritual transition for new members and to encourage faith in the Lord through constant prayer.

I am on the Greeters Committee through which I welcome all into the sanctuary. I am also on the committee

that prepares communion the first Sunday of each month. I am a member of the Business & Professional Club that promotes culture and socialization to all who are interested.

My career was that of a Registered Professional Nurse from which I retired two years ago. Good health maintenance is important for wellness and longevity for our members and community.



## Jerome Hairston

Being the son of a Deacon and member of Riverside, I appreciate the fellowship and challenges of our diverse church community. Working with clergy, staff and commission members throughout my current appointment has been rewarding. To continue serving in a manner that facilitates fellowship and care amongst the Riverside church fulfills my desire to be a part of our collective faith journey. Traditions like membership class, coffee hour and how we collectively pray and comfort each other are vital to the health of our church. I aim to work within the commission to cultivate this while we carry out the mission of the Riverside Church.



Fortunately, I had the tremendous opportunity to listen to the congregation through my prior service on the Senior Minister Search Committee. Like you, I care about Riverside and feel confident our fellowship can continue to grow. Yes, I understand the ties that bind us and will always be mindful of this in my service to you. I currently usher, serve on the building committee, participate in MCPL and have had previous corporate board and officer experiences in finance. With your support, I intend to serve as the Membership Care and Parish Life Commission representative to the Council to continue the work I enjoy while offering my broader abilities to the Church's governance.



## David Jensen

I have a wide variety of experience in many areas.

I have an MS in Computer Science from Columbia and a BA in Finance from Illinois.



## Kurt Karandy

I first ventured to Riverside in 2014 out of curiosity: I learned a bit of its history in school, so I wanted to visit. But what I saw happening at Riverside in the present that compelled me to return each week. It was the warm embrace of Riversiders—in the pews, at coffee hour, and yes, even, in meetings—that inspired my decision to join.



I love Riverside because of the love, grace, and welcome you've shown to me, and I yearned to join in this church because of the fierce dedication you have to live as the beloved community. The opportunity to serve on the MCPL commission would be an expression of my love for Riverside and all this community has shown me.

I want to participate in the conversations that help nurture our shared life, welcome newcomers, and explore how we may grow together into the future.



## Gregory Muniz

After years of searching, I have finally found a church, The Riverside Church, which has brought so much spiritual meaning to my life. Given my own personal journey, I feel my life experiences can significantly contribute to achieving the mission of the church while offering me the opportunity for personal growth and leadership.

My initial involvement with the church as a Membership, Care & Parish Life Commission volunteer has given me the opportunity to be involved with many church services, i.e. volunteering with in-take table duties for new members, new member orientation class, and assisting with the set-up for Joining Sundays. Also, I volunteered for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Memorial Service events.

I have, for many years, involved myself in contributing to civic duties. As a staff member of the United Nations, I was on a Peacekeeping Mission in Cambodia for two years for its first elections when I helped educate Cambodians on the importance and process of free elections. For 10 years, I was in a Buddy Program with the Gay Men's Health Crisis organization to help people with HIV and AIDS find meaning in their lives. These experiences have added to my ability to engage with people on a variety of levels.

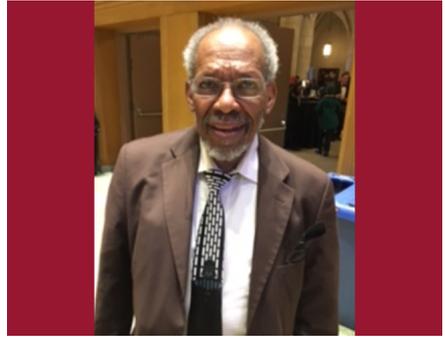


## Edward L. Roberts

Membership is one of the primary aspects of church participation. Serving on a commission for encouraging others is a calling as well as serving others sick and in need.

I have served one term on the Membership, Care, & Parish Life Commission and desire to continue. I

have also been a member of the Inspirational Choir for many years. God calls us in a multitude of ways in the Christian journey.



## Vanessa Wilkinson

I've always believed that my purpose in this life was helping people. Being a member of the Membership, Care, & Parish Life Commission will help broaden the horizon for me to achieve that goal.

I am passionate even emotional in what I believe in. I'm hoping to bring a fresh outlook, innovating ideas and a warm embrace to this service. Over the years of being a member, I've always tried to volunteer and be involved in caring for others.

I have tried to be a friend with open arms and a warm heart. I believe that my medical career and background has prepared me for this next exciting journey in life.



## Rosalyn Witter

Over the years, I have been a member of various organizations including: The Westchester Black Women's Political Caucus, All Islands Association and Organization of International Development. Currently at Riverside, I am a member of the Business & Professional Women's Club. I have participated in the Annual Career Day



Program and I have assisted with the preparation of communion glasses. I am also a retired RN, BSN, CIC (Certification in Infection Control by Centers for Disease Control ).

Based on my experiences I have acquired the following capabilities: able to communicate effectively, organizer, team player. These elements combined, continue to ignite my heart's desire to serve the church and community with passion.



# MISSION & SOCIAL JUSTICE

3 openings

*Kara Dago-Clark*

*James Litkett*

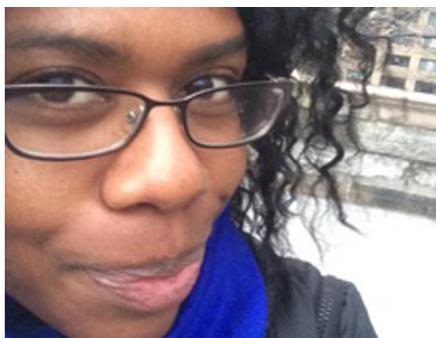
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## **Kara Dago-Clark**

The message of God's fierce love from the pulpit enacted through mission and social justice work was why I fell in love with Riverside and is why I am here today. My activism was reared by MSJ and young adult programming. I believe my journey thus far has gleaned messages and counsel that would prove beneficial to the work of the MSJ commission, congregation and greater community. I was a member of "The Way"

for four years and liaison on the MSJ commission for the Youth and Young Adults group. I am a member of the Music Committee, have performed in the "Christ Chapel Recital Series", went on the YAYA 2006 Mission Trip to New Orleans, and am on the leadership team of the English Conversation Program.

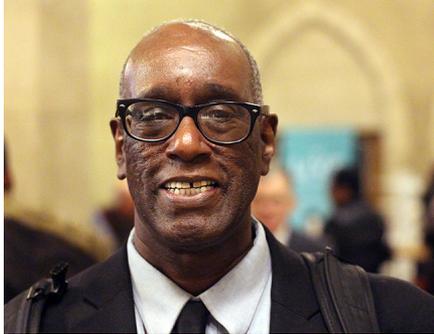
I am a PreK-5th grade music teacher and arts education liaison who has taught in the South Bronx and Harlem for the last 11 years. This role directly keys me into the communities we serve and the large system that serves their children. I negotiate issues of racism, homelessness, poverty, and economic inequality daily and see the consequences of these injustices in the condition of children and adults alike. This paired with the work I have through the years with MSJ gives me a perspective I hope is of value to the MSJ Commission and to Riverside.



## James Litkett

I have been called and have answered the call for the last five years in escalating effect momentum. I seek this position because it is my destiny.

I will bring my five years of working in the wilderness of New York City Streets to rise up into a unstoppable force to be dealt with and help raise Riverside back to it's glory.



## Douglas E. Miller

I'm involved in the Ecclesia out reach ministry program for over ten years. Every fourth Sunday of the month Riverside members bring food and drink to those who are hungry. I love serving those in need with love and compassion to Marcus Garvey park community. We gather for worship and those who attend are blessed with hearing Scripture and short sermon reflecting and responding to how God speak to our hearts. Holy communion is also served.

I feel called to serve on Mission & Social Justice Commission (MSJ) I currently served on Church Council & Building Committee. My hobbies are listening to classical music and reading. For past ten years I have been singing with Lehman college community chorus. Being part of Mission and Social Justice Commission I would advocate and witness for all social causes and rights. Especially for Black lives matter and for more affordable housing. Keeping the true tradition of Riverside church standing up for the rights and privileges for all races and ethnic groups across all racial lines. Following example of our Lord and Savior. I believe in the power of prayer for results as we struggle to achieve changes in our society. For the past twenty-five years, I work and serve those with mentally challenged behaviors. So they too can live and become productive members of this great society.

May God richly bless Riverside church.



## Margaret Elaine Plaza

I am an educator, professional dancer, choreographer and arts, social justice, and public education advocate who loves God and whose purpose in life is serving the underserved. I have dedicated my 20-year teaching career to working with children in the public schools, using the arts to facilitate the transformation of the lives of youth, and am currently a MSE candidate in Educational Leadership, Administration and Policy at Fordham University at Lincoln Center. The arts, education, and social justice are my life's passions and I feel called to use these gifts in the secular and sacred to support call-to-action that seek equity, social justice and equal access for all.



Lay leadership will support me living a radical life of faith, will bring me closer to God, his word, my faith community, and will support my development as leader always seeking to serve with God's core values always at the center. I currently serve on the Riverside Church's social justice ministry, the Latino ministry and attend open Bible study. I will bring fervent passion, vision, a collaborative spirit and leadership to the work of the church if elected to serve on The Riverside Church Mission & Social Justice Commission.



## Forrest R. Taylor

Riverside's spiritual values call us to a purpose higher than ourselves and offer a prophetic voice for liberation, mercy healing, and hope. I am drawn to and would be honored to serve on MSJ as it works to strengthen the efforts of people grounded in faith and conscience to reduce economic inequality and promote economic justice, in New

York and beyond. I intend to work with faith and other grassroots leaders to frame the public debate in terms of fairness and justice for families, and work to build opportunity and prosperity for all New Yorkers.

I currently serve on Riverside's Personnel and Salary Committee. With a background in New York city and state government, I have fought to implement laws and policies that would lead to a more equitable and just society. I have had the opportunity to review hundreds of programs, and fund dozens of others; all with the mandate of implementing change and exhibiting compassion.



## Henry Williams

I have been a member of The Riverside Church since 1994. During my membership I have served on the following: MCPL (2 times), Worship Commission, Bible Walk to Holy Land (2012), South Africa Good Will Tour (2004), greeter, Sharing Fund, Maranatha - AIDS ministry, archives and food pantry. I also went to Washington DC with Rev. Phelps in 2013 for the 50th Anniversary Civil Rights March.



I am a retired registered professional nurse by profession. I love serving or helping people - it feeds my soul. My hobbies include coin collecting, reading black history books, stamp collecting. I enjoy going to the theatre, musical concerts, spending all day in Harlem, Central Park, Greenwich Village, and at the beach with friends.



# WORSHIP

4 openings

*Nancy Clark  
Irene Ryan King  
Linda LeShanna  
Karen McVoy  
Iniva Ngaka*

*Listen to interviews with the nominees at [www.speaker.com/show/welcome-to-riverside](http://www.speaker.com/show/welcome-to-riverside)*



## **Nancy Clark**

Prior to officially joining The Riverside Church, I was a frequent visitor and the worship service always left me with a sense of spiritual fulfillment. The music and the message carried me through the week and I always felt welcome. If elected, it would be a joy and a pleasure to bring suggestions from the congregation on ways to make our

worship services even more inclusive. This engagement with members would create a greater sense of community and fellowship and would deepen my connection to my brothers and sisters in Christ.

I am currently a member of the Inspirational Choir and I also served on the church's 85 Anniversary Committee. Over the years I have assisted with the planning of several worship services for family celebrations such as wedding anniversaries, milestone birthdays and memorial services.



## Irene Ryan King

I sought election to lay leadership three years ago because I wanted to be of service, to deepen my relationship with God, and to get to know others who were on the same spiritual journey. To my great joy, I have realized those goals as a member of the Worship Commission, and I seek to continue my service. I feel strongly, as many of us do, that worship is the heart and soul of this church community.



I wish to help empower the Worship Commission to be a creative team, a resource for the clergy and community, and a channel through which members can share their hopes and vision for worship. I have participated in worship as a member of the Riverside Choir since 1999, and more recently, as a lay reader and Communion steward. I currently serve on the Stewardship Committee and am a past member of the Nominating Committee and the Warm Welcome Task Force.



## Linda LeShanna

“Everything must change.” Is it time to get involved? “God is working his/her purpose out.” What is God asking me to do? I am trying to listen. I am answering the call to serve.

As a 10th grader, a mission trip to the American Baptist Mission in Limbe, Haiti challenged my view of the world, its people, and of God. My eyes were opened, and my life and faith were forever changed. I believe the strategic leadership skills, and practical event planning/management expertise honed in my 33 year career at Girl Scouts of the USA can bring value to the Worship Commission.

If elected, I will champion communication: without clear communication, there’s confusion and undue concern. I will champion context: nothing happens in isolation. All decisions must be made within the context of a long-range plan, with input by members of The Riverside Church.





## Karen McVoy

I am called again to serve on the Worship Commission because my commitment to the mission of the church has been revitalized. I believe my two decades of involvement in the service of Worship, singing in The Riverside Choir as well as serving as the Secretary of the Worship Commission, provide a strong basis to work as a

liaison with congregation and staff to continue to make Worship a meaningful experience. My experience is much broader than Worship having chaired the Building Committee for many years, which gave me a great deal of experience with our budget. I hope to bring to my Commission service the same Light that I am called by the Lord to bring every Sunday morning singing in the Choir. I want to be a part of the shaping and molding of this blessed Progressive Christian community so that we create a model of sustainability that takes lessons from our glorious past and creates a “home” for my 4 children and their children.



## Iniva Ngaka

Worship is at the core of my coming to church. It reminds me to strive for the beloved community. Hence, I seek this position because I would like to be more engaged in the community and to share my creativity with the church.

I believe that if elected, my diverse cultural and religious backgrounds, my love for serving, and my pluralistic world views would be in line with the mission of the church. Moreover, I trust that the work of the commission will strengthen my understanding of theology and deepen my faith.

As a current lay reader and an attendant to many worship events, I aspire to help in improving every worship service through my involvement in the commission.

Lastly, it is my utmost desire to benefit the commission through my meticulous attention to details, my advocacy skills and my fondness for creative writing.



# NOMINATING COMMITTEE

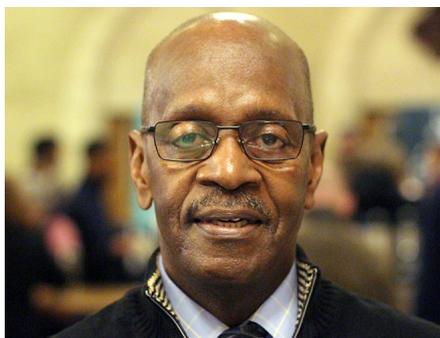
6 openings

*Samuel Coleman*

*Shelly Ellis Herrington*

*Karen Mott*

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## **Samuel Coleman**

I believe that active participation in the programs and ministries of the church may be an act of worship: by such participation one aids the church as it seeks to mirror God's kingdom here on Earth.

A long-time member of The Riverside Church, I have been involved in the English Conversation and New Member programs. I am on the Sharing Fund Committee, where I previously served as co-chair, and now I seek election to a second term on the Nominating Committee where I currently serve as secretary.

I am retired from a career as a counselor, instructor, and administrator at Lehman College, CUNY, where I provided leadership in student service and development programs.



## Shelly Ellis Herrington

My “calling” to this lay leadership position started when I became a member of the Church in 2010. I am seeking this position because I feel that my input of involvement with the Church will prove very valuable. What I will bring to the position is: Insightfulness, Intelligence, and Profitability.

Being so extensively involved with the Church has proven to be a “wow” factor for me. I was involved with the Membership, Care, & Parish Life Committee for a while, as-well-as volunteered services with the church on numerous occasions for numerous events.



## Karen Mott

I was appointed to fill a position on the nominating committee three years ago. Seeking a second term I would like to continue my commitment working with fellow committee members to identify qualified, dedicated Riverside members willing to fill lay leadership positions needed to carry out our church mission.

Previously I have served on the Education Commission, taught in the church school and have been involved in Laity Empowerment. Presently I regularly attend Morning Light services and am serving on the Sharing Fund. My major employment has been in the social services. I taught school for many years and was a case worker for NYC Adm. for Children’s Services. I can give the needed time and energy to the work of the Nominating Committee.









*for more information visit [www.trcnyc.org](http://www.trcnyc.org)*