

## **Sky McCracken**

Sky McCracken serves as superintendent of the Purchase District and has since February 2011. The district encompasses the Western Kentucky portion of the Memphis Conference and includes the metropolitan areas of Paducah and Murray, Kentucky, along with many suburban areas, small towns and rural communities.

He was appointed dean of the Memphis Conference cabinet in the spring of 2015.

Sky was born and raised in Martin, Tennessee, located in the northwest corner of the state. He grew up in the faith community of the First United Methodist Church, where he was baptized and confirmed. His father was a professor at the University of Tennessee at Martin, where Sky graduated in 1988 with a B.S. degree in psychology and criminal justice. He received his M. Div. degree in 1991 from Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia.

Sky has served churches in Tennessee, Georgia and Kentucky. He was licensed for ministry in 1987, ordained a deacon in 1990 and ordained an elder in 1993. He served a two-point charge in Graves County, Ky., during his last year in college and served as a student pastor in the North Georgia Conference while in seminary.

Among many board and agency positions, Sky served on the United Methodist General Board of Discipleship (now known as Discipleship Ministries) as a representative from the Order of St. Luke. He was a member of the Nashville Area Strategic Mapping Team. He participated in several Spiritual Leadership Inc. (SLI) projects and is co-author of the Memphis Conference's Generative Leadership Academy.

In 2012, Sky authored a petition to General Conference that was slightly amended and adopted, resulting in a change to the Book of Discipline – in the section involving funding to theological schools from the United Methodist Ministerial Education Fund. Sky believes the change helps ensure Wesleyan-trained faculty are in United Methodist seminaries.

Sky married Liz in 1987. They have one daughter, Sarah, who married Jordan Weekes in 2014.

Sky's record of ministerial service includes a diversity of contexts:

- 2011-current: Purchase District Superintendent, Memphis Conference
- 2005-2011: Reidland United Methodist Church, Paducah, KY
- 2001-2005: First United Methodist Church, Senior Pastor, Director of Hickman County Parish, Clinton, KY
- 1996-2001: East Trinity United Methodist Church, Jackson, Tennessee
- 1992-1996: First United Methodist Church, Associate Pastor, Martin, Tennessee
- 1991-1992: Hazel-Mason's Chapel United Methodist Church, Hazel, Kentucky
- 1989-1991: Tri-Circuit United Methodist Churches, Banks County, Georgia
- 1987-1988: Lynnville-Poyner's Chapel United Methodist Churches, Graves County, Kentucky

- 1986-1987: First United Methodist Church, Gleason, Tennessee, Youth Director
- 1985-1986 (summers): Summer Staff, Waterfront Director, at Lakeshore United Methodist Assembly

He was licensed for ministry in 1987, ordained a deacon in 1990, and ordained an elder in 1993.

Sky has a passion for generative discipleship and leadership development, a vision for God's reign, all with a servant's heart. His vision for the Church seeks to transform churches, laity, and clergy into communities that create and nurture generative disciples who practice Kingdom living.

### **Relevant Qualifications**

- Jurisdictional Conference
  - Delegate: 2004, 2012, 2016
  - Alternate: 2008
- General Conference
  - Delegate: 2016
  - Alternate: 2004, 2012
- Position Held at a General Agency
  - General Board of Discipleship, Order of St. Luke Representative
- Positions Held in the Memphis Conference
  - Assistant Conference Secretary
  - Board of Trustees, Lakeshore United Methodist Assembly
  - Board of Ordained Ministry
  - Chair, Commission on Equitable Compensation
  - Communications Action Team
  - Division of Higher Education and Campus Ministry
  - Intentional Discipleship Action Team
  - Nashville Area Strategic Mapping Team
  - Conference Worship Committee
  - Community Spiritual Director, West Tennessee Emmaus Community
- Position Held in the Southeastern Jurisdiction
  - Committee on Investigation
- Publications and Lectures
  - Co-author of leadership and discipleship resource, "Generative Leadership Academy."
  - Contributor, *Sharing in Faith* series, UMC.com
  - Contributor, *Ministry Matters*™
  - Lecturer, *Methodism 101, 202*, in the Memphis Conference
  - Contributor, *Homily Service*

- Contributor, *Sacramental Life*
- Former Editor, *The Font* Instructor, Sacramental Theology and Practice, Beginning Pastor's School, Memphis Conference
- Personal Blog: [revdsky.blogspot.com](http://revdsky.blogspot.com)
- Fruitfulness in Pastoral Ministry:
  - Coordinated covenant discipleship groups for adults, and began youth covenant groups, assisted in renovation of sanctuary and expansion while associate pastor at Martin First UMC. Strengthened children and youth ministries in participation and spiritual growth.
  - Led East Trinity UMC and the Jackson/East Union community through rebuilding after the January 1999 tornado, working with UMCOR and local and federal agencies.
  - Led Clinton First UMC through a 10,000 sq. ft. building expansion and office addition, with an emphasis on community outreach and mission. Facilitated the beginning of small-group discipleship and spiritual emphases.
  - Led Reidland UMC through a campus expansion, taking advantage of a road closure to acquire continuous property. Retired significant indebtedness, began and completed sanctuary renovation for enhance media capabilities.
- Purchase District (formerly called Paducah District)
  - Initiated an SLI/incubator for a district strategy team, which led to several churches in the district to contract with SLI or similar processes to develop leadership and discipleship in their local churches.
  - Completed assessment and interviews with churches with a history of not paying apportionments at 100%, raising awareness and our covenant relationship as churches and a denomination.
  - Began a district "Mission Blitz" where the whole district mobilized one weekend a year into local mission projects, which continues today.
  - Co-authored and developed the Generative Leadership Academy, an initiative to help change the culture within our local churches, and to develop leadership with an understanding of (a) what it means to be disciples who are willing and able to serve in alongside clergy and lay leadership, (b) have a vision for reaching their local communities as the hands and feet of Christ, and (c) reconnecting to the Conference and sister churches in the district. Each of the four 24-hour sessions revolve around (1) Meeting God — the foundation for disciples , (2) Piety – the practice of being with God, (3) Mercy – God's love in action, and (4) Spiritual Gifts – Living into God's call.
- Personal interests:
  - Deep appreciation of music
  - Motorcycling
  - High school and college basketball, baseball, and softball (which Sky officiated from 1983 – 2011)