



THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Dakotas-Minnesota Area

122 W. Franklin Ave., Suite 400, Minneapolis, MN 55404-2472 / Phone: 612-230-6152

June 16, 2025

Dr. Richard Huskey was set to be ordained as an elder in full connection at the Celebration of Life in Ministry worship service during the 2025 Annual Conference session in St. Cloud, Minnesota. Unfortunately, he suffered a medical event and was unable to attend. Immediately after Annual Conference, Bishop Lanette Plambeck traveled to the Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, Pennsylvania to ordain him. In 1977, while in process to become an elder, the Minnesota Conference discontinued his orders after Huskey disclosed he was gay. Following the 2024 General Conference's removal of the denomination's decades-long ban on gay clergy, Huskey requested to re-enter and complete the ordination process and, with recommendation from the Board of Ordained Ministry, was voted on and approved for ordination at the 2025 Minnesota Clergy Session.

From Bishop Lanette Plambeck:

On the evening of June 14, 2025, in a sacred and historic moment of grace and justice, The United Methodist Church ordained Rev. Dr. Richard Huskey as an elder in full connection.

Nearly fifty years after being removed from the ordination process for being gay, we gathered at the bedside of Richard Huskey, who was joyfully reinstated as a provisional member, ordained as elder in full connection, and received into full membership into the Minnesota Annual Conference.

Time together was marked by the laying on of hands, prayer, sharing of scripture and song, honoring Wesley's historic questions, and engaging the ordination liturgy of The United Methodist Church. In the presence of a small circle including his bishop, clergy, laity, and faithful witnesses, we honored a call that never ceased and a faithfulness that never failed.

The service included the hymns "Jesus Loves Me" and "Draw the Circle Wide"—songs that reflect Richard's enduring trust in God's love and his lifelong commitment to inclusion, compassion, and the expansive grace of Christ. The scriptural foundation for the service was 1 John 4, a passage that proclaims, "God is love," and calls us to love one another boldly and without fear. It was made clear to those gathered that Rick was a fan of the selected scripture.

Representing the broader connection of The United Methodist Church and participating in the service were members of the Susquehanna Conference:

- Rev. Dr. Tom Salsgiver, Assistant to Bishop Héctor A. Burgos-Núñez

- Ms. Cindy Weaver, Executive Administrative Assistant to the Bishop and Conference Secretary
- Rev. Dr. Gary Weaver, Dean of the Appointive Cabinet
- Chaplain Travis, Licensed Local Pastor, from the medical center where Rick received care, who read the scripture.

The Board of Ordained Ministry, having examined Rick, recommended him for reinstatement as a provisional member and for ordination to elder's orders. Upon meeting all the expectations and requirements, Rick was to be ordained at the 2025 Session of the Minnesota Annual Conference. Unfortunately, he suffered a medical emergency and was unable to travel to St. Cloud for the service. In a beautiful witness of the connection, conference attendees took a special offering enabling Bishop Lanette to travel to Rick.

Though primarily communicating through eye contact and limited verbal affirmations, Rick laughed in joy during his ordination vows and spoke the words, "hallelujah" and "amen."

Rick received his certificates of ordination, conference membership, and retirement. He was also granted the cross awarded to those commissioned to serve in ministry, the stole given to the 2025 class of ordinands, and the towel used for foot-washing.

In this holy and tender hour, the Church bore witness to the truth that God's call is irrevocable and that the Spirit still moves through the lives of those who love with courage and serve with humility. We give thanks for Rev. Dr. Richard Huskey—his faith, his perseverance, and his prophetic witness—and we rejoice that he is now fully and forever among the elders of the Church.

Rev. Dr. Richard Huskey died June 15, 2025, shortly after 5 p.m. Eastern Time.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bishop Lanette Plambeck". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of "Bishop" and "Plambeck" being capitalized and prominent.

Bishop Lanette Plambeck

Resident Bishop

Dakotas-Minnesota Episcopal Area of The United Methodist Church