

The United Methodist City Society
Strengthening Mission Partnerships



475 Riverside Drive, Room 1922, New York, NY 10115
Rev. Dr. William Shillady, Executive Director

Dear Friends,

We invite you to our 181st Annual Meeting of the United Methodist City Society. It will take place at the Church of the Village in Manhattan. It will be **Sunday, November 17th, 2019 at 3:30pm.**

The United Methodist City Society is your partner in mission and ministry in the Metropolitan region. All congregations from the Long Island East, Long Island West, Metropolitan and the New York-Connecticut districts are the members of the Society. Each church is entitled to be present and to vote during the meeting.

The theme of this year's meeting is "**CELEBRATING CHILDREN!**" Mark 10: 13-16 is our scriptural theme of the event.

Jesus Blesses Little Children

¹³ People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. ¹⁴ But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. ¹⁵ Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." ¹⁶ And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them. Mark 10: 13-16...

Our featured speaker is Dr. LaKeesha Walrond, the recently installed President of New York Theological Seminary. She is the first woman and African American to lead this institution. The seminary has an urban ministry focus and is leading the charge reimagining Theological Education in the 21st century. We hope our clergy, who are graduates of NYTS, will come and meet her.

Dr. Walrond is an educator deeply committed to child advocacy. She is a veteran of the North Carolina's public-school system, where she worked for eleven years as a teacher, a coordinator for special education programs, an assistant principal, and principal at Durham's Lakewood Elementary School. Dr. Walrond earned her Ph.D. in Special Education and Literacy, as well as master's Degrees in both Education and School Administration from UNC Chapel Hill. Most recently, Dr. Walrond earned her Master of Divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary in New York City.

Her passion endeavor is writing books to end sexual violence against children. Her first book, 'My Body is Special,' was released in December 2017. Eva, the main character in the book, helps children develop a plan if they ever feel unsafe. Subsequent books will teach children to advocate for themselves in the midst of friends, family, and strangers.

I am so grateful for her willingness to come and share with us since her passion is ministry to children.

Come and hear how the UMCS is finding ways to provide new ministry to communities and not just to church buildings.

Attached you will find a flyer with active links to the RSVP or, if you prefer, you can click here: <https://forms.gle/HXWHdJb8XcggwnvW7> you can complete the fillable form and return via email to Dmarinez@umcitysociety.org. You can send the registration form back to the Society if you cannot use the link. (475 Riverside Drive, Room 1922, New York, NY 10115)

There is no cost to attend. However, we would appreciate an RSVP so that we can prepare for a reception following the meeting. **Our reception will feature great food from Smitty and Mo's restaurant in Newark, NJ.** The owner, Michael Vann, a leader in the restaurant industry, the former owner of the Shark Bar and the Soul Café is a great United Methodist and a friend to the Society.