

A Lewis Center Report on  
**Clergy Age Trends in the  
United Methodist Church**  
2024 Report

Elders • Deacons • Local Pastors

**2024 Report**

**Lewis Center for Church Leadership**

Wesley Theological Seminary



Lewis Center  
for Church Leadership

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### Highlights of the 2024 Report

#### Impact of Disaffiliation on Numbers and Ages of United Methodist Clergy

Any report on changes in clergy numbers and ages must acknowledge clergy leaving as a result of the disaffiliation process between 2019 and 2024. While this is a factor in declining clergy numbers, it is difficult with the information we have at this point to identify the specific impact of disaffiliation on various age groupings of clergy. There are several variables that cause numbers of clergy by age to change year by year. There are new people entering the age group, others who age out of the cohort, as well as those who withdraw or die. However, there are some things we know from our age statistics and our previous study of disaffiliations overall, [\*Twenty-Five Percent of Churches Disaffiliated from the United Methodist Church\*](#). These are trends that appear to be present, but more data are needed for certainty.

- Clergy losses were greatest among local pastors and least among deacons.
- Among elders, it appears that losses occurred more among older (55-72) elders and young elders (under 35).

#### Young Elder Numbers Continue Decline But Increase as Proportion of All Elders

The recent decline in the number of young elders (under 35) began in 2017 and followed modest gains after the low point of 2005. That decline continues; however, the scale of the decline increased dramatically beginning in 2019. Since the most recent decline began in 2019, there has been a decline of 63 percent in the number of under-35 elders. The losses have been greater among men than women based on the proportion of each among young elders. The number of young elders in 2024 is 398, a loss of 51 in the past year. This year sets a new record for the fewest young elders.

However, since the overall number of active elders of all ages continues to decline, young elders constitute 5 percent of active elders in 2024, up from 4 percent in 2023.

#### Some Increased Presence of Middle Age Elders

Beginning in 2000, we saw a trend of fewer elders in the middle age (35-54) group and more elders in the older (55-72) group. Despite a mandatory retirement age of 72, with most retiring before that age, the pool of older elders continued to grow for twenty years. In 2020, a modest turn in this trend began that continues in 2024. The middle age group as a proportion of all elders increased to 45 percent in 2024 from 44 percent in 2023. The 55-72 elder age group decreased to 50 percent in 2024 from 52 percent in 2023.

#### Young Deacons and Local Pastors Also Decrease

There were also decreases in the number of young deacons and young local pastors in 2024. In 2024, there were 60 deacons younger than 35 or 7 percent of all deacons, down from 74 young deacons comprising 8 percent of all deacons in 2023. In 2024, there were 294 local pastors younger than 35 down from 416 young local pastors in 2023, comprising 7 percent of all local pastors in both years. Keep in mind that the number of deacons in this report is lower than their presence in the denomination since many deacons serving in settings other than congregations have pension plans through those agencies rather than Wespath, from which our numbers come.

## Purpose and Description

The purpose of this ongoing research effort is to identify clergy age trends in the United Methodist Church so that denominational leaders have the data for planning and a baseline for monitoring future changes. This report builds on previous reports on clergy age trends issued by the Lewis Center for Church Leadership. The first report, *Clergy Age Trends in the United Methodist Church: 1985-2005*, documented the dramatic decline in United Methodist young clergy in both numbers and percentages over 20 years. This report presents a snapshot of where clergy age trends stand in May 2024.

This report is made possible through partnership with the denominational pension agency, Wespath. The Lewis Center for Church Leadership works with Wespath each year to determine age trends for United Methodist clergy.

The project covers elders, deacons, and local pastors in the five jurisdictional conferences of the United Methodist Church in the United States. While not all clergy are in the denominational pension system, most are, and the percentage not in the system tends to stay the same across the years, thus making trend comparisons possible. Readers should keep in mind that the total number of deacons is significantly lower in this report than their presence in the denomination because more deacons than other clergy work in employment settings with pension plans other than through Wespath. For local pastors, both full-time and part-time local pastors are included. Since Wespath does not keep records of clergy by race, we are not able to make comparisons by racial groups.

To help the church address the dramatic loss of young clergy first reported in 2005, the Lewis Center for Church Leadership has provided resources beginning with *The Crisis of Younger Clergy* by Lovett H. Weems, Jr., and Ann A. Michel (Abingdon, 2008) and the formation of cohorts of young clergy to provide advanced leader development.

More recently, the Lewis Center developed a series of free one-page downloadable documents to assist those seeking to support younger clergy.

- [Why Young Clergy Matter](#)
- [Ways Established Church Leaders Can Work with Young Clergy](#)
- [Suggestions for Churches with a Young Pastor](#)
- [Suggestions for Churches with a Single Pastor](#)
- [Suggestions for Churches with a Clergywoman](#)

## Contributors

Lovett H. Weems, Jr., senior consultant of the Lewis Center for Church Leadership, was project director. Matthew Lyons, marketing manager, contributed to the project. Andrew Q. Hendren, general secretary of Wespath, and the staff, particularly Eloy Cerenil, provided essential cooperation and data.

## Summary of Findings

### Young Clergy Trends

#### Young Elders

- The number of under-35 elders decreased from 449 to 398, a decline of 51. This continues an eight-year decline, though the decline in numbers in 2023-24 was only one-quarter that of the previous year.
- On the other hand, the percentage of young elders among all active elders increased slightly from 4.49 percent last year to 4.68 percent in 2024.
- The Texas and Central Texas Conferences reported the highest percentage of young elders at 9.8 percent.
- The Top Ten Conferences by percentage
  - Texas (#1 in 2023, 2020-2019, 2016-2014, 2012) and Central Texas (#1 for the first time)
  - North Carolina
  - North Texas (#1 in 2022 and 2021)
  - Great Plains (new to the Top Ten this year)
  - Florida (first time in the Top Ten)
  - Louisiana
  - North Alabama (new to the Top Ten this year)
  - Pacific Northwest
  - Dakotas and Alabama-West Florida (tie)
- The largest total number of young elders (24) is in the Virginia Conference.

#### Young Deacons

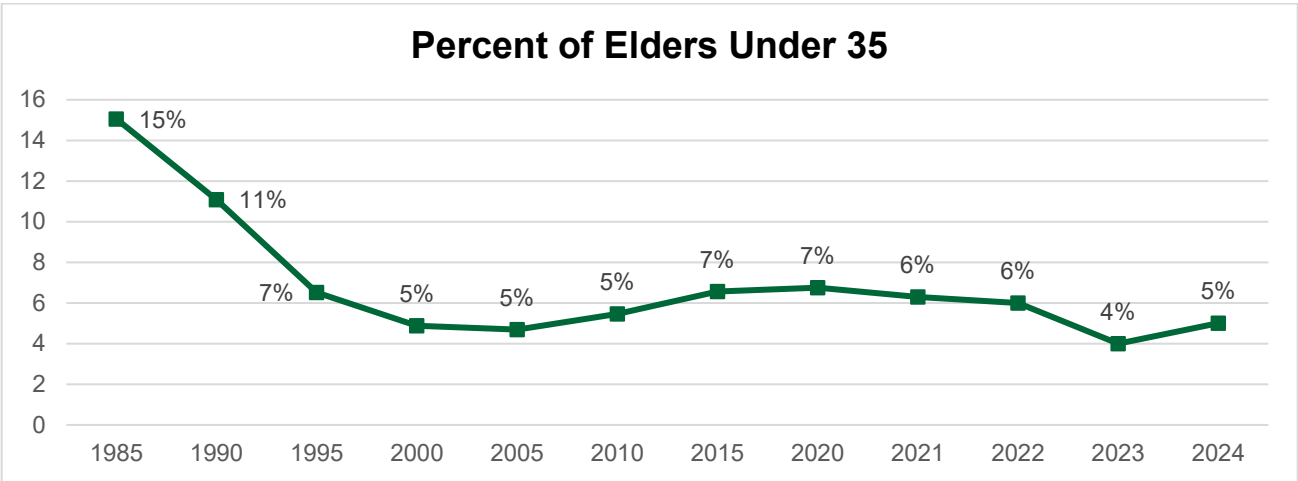
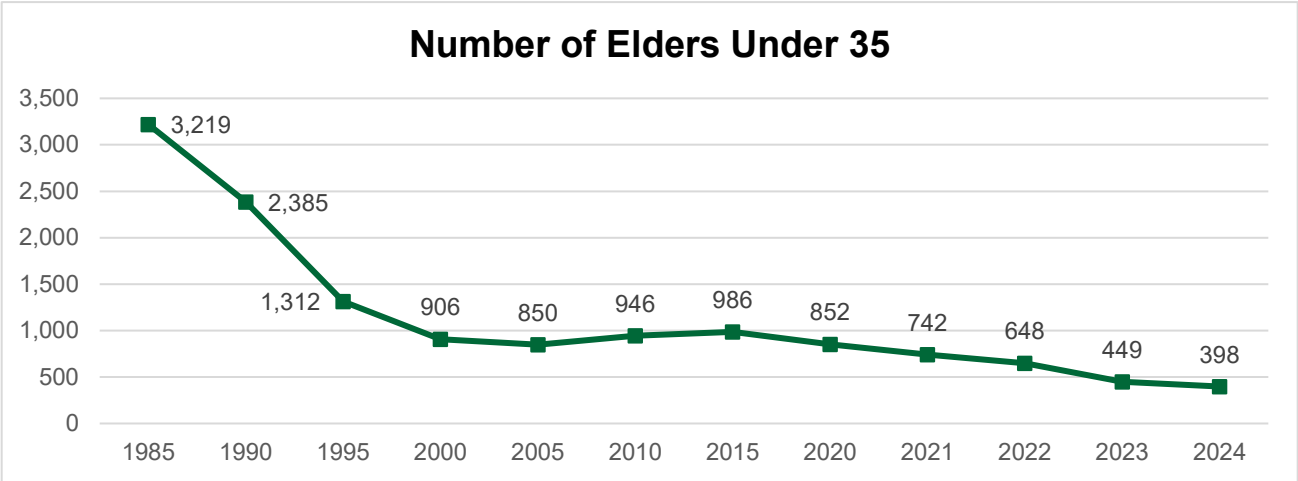
- The number of under-35 deacons decreased by 14 in 2024 to 60.
- The percentage of young deacons among all active deacons declined from 8.2 percent last year to 7.2 percent in 2024.
- The percentage of young deacons remains above that of elders and slightly above that of local pastors.

#### Young Local Pastors

- The number of under-35 local pastors declined by 122 in the past year to 294 in 2024.
- The percentage of young local pastors among all active local pastors stayed the same at 7 percent in 2024.

# Elders

To have comparable figures across the years for elders, the figures include *not only those ordained elder but also those commissioned on the elder track but not yet ordained.*



Trends of Elders 1985-2024

Year	No. of Elders	Elders Under 35	% <35	Elders 35-54	% 35-54	Elders 55-72	% 55-72
1985	21,378	3,219	15%	12,305	58%	5,854	27%
1990	21,507	2,385	11%	12,678	59%	6,444	30%
1995	20,117	1,312	7%	12,843	64%	5,962	30%
2000	18,576	906	5%	12,005	65%	5,665	30%
2005	18,141	850	5%	9,872	54%	7,419	41%
2010	17,293	946	5%	7,698	45%	8,649	50%
2015	15,019	986	7%	5,746	38%	8,287	55%
2020	12,610	852	7%	4,830	38%	6,928	55%
2021	11,771	742	6%	4,652	40%	6,377	54%
2022	11,168	648	6%	4,577	41%	5,321	53%
2023	10,010	449	4%	4,391	44%	5,179	52%
2024	8,505	398	5%	3,813	45%	4,294	50%

**Gender Breakdown within  
Age Cohorts – Elders**

Year	Gender	Under 35	35-54	55-72
2021	Men	62%	67%	68%
	Women	38%	33%	32%
2022	Men	61%	66%	68%
	Women	39%	34%	32%
2023	Men	59%	65%	66%
	Women	41%	35%	34%
2024	Men	57%	61%	63%
	Women	43%	39%	37%

**Median and Average Ages – Elders**

Year	Median* Age	Average Age
1985	48	47
1990	47	48
1995	48	48
2000	50	50
2005	52	52
2010	55	53
2015	56	53
2020	56	53
2021	56	54
2022	56	53
2023	56	54
2024	55	54

\*Median – half older, half younger

Average and Median Ages by Conference

Median - half older, half younger

CONFERENCE	2024 Average	2024 Median
ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA	52	53
ALASKA MISSIONARY	-	-
ARKANSAS	52	53
BALTIMORE-WASHINGTON	54	56
CALIFORNIA-NEVADA	57	58
CALIFORNIA-PACIFIC	56	57
CENTRAL APPALACHIAN	44	44
CENTRAL TEXAS	52	54
DAKOTAS	51	52
DESERT SOUTHWEST	54	55
EAST OHIO	54	56
EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA	57	60
FLORIDA	52	53
GREAT PLAINS	51	52
GREATER NEW JERSEY	54	55
HOLSTON	53	54
ILLINOIS GREAT RIVERS	55	58
INDIANA	54	57
IOWA	54	56
KENTUCKY	51	53
LOUISIANA	53	55
MICHIGAN	54	55
MINNESOTA	54	56
MISSISSIPPI	54	56
MISSOURI	53	53
MOUNTAIN SKY	52	54
NEW ENGLAND	53	55

CONFERENCE	2024 Average	2024 Median
NEW MEXICO	55	57
NEW YORK	57	59
NORTH ALABAMA	51	52
NORTH CAROLINA	51	51
NORTH GEORGIA	53	54
NORTH TEXAS	52	53
NORTHERN ILLINOIS	54	56
NORTHWEST TEXAS	56	56
OKLAHOMA	54	55
OKLAHOMA INDIAN MSNY	61	63
OREGON IDAHO	54	54
PACIFIC NORTHWEST	52	53
PENINSULA-DELAWARE	57	60
RIO TEXAS	55	55
SOUTH CAROLINA	55	57
SOUTH GEORGIA	56	58
SUSQUEHANNA	56	59
TENNESSEE-WESTERN KY	53	54
TEXAS	51	50
UPPER NEW YORK	56	58
VIRGINIA	52	52
WEST OHIO	55	57
WEST VIRGINIA	56	59
WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA	53	55
WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA	55	57
WISCONSIN	54	56
<b>All Elders</b>	54	55



# Elders

## Presence of Elders under 35 by Annual Conference 2022-2024

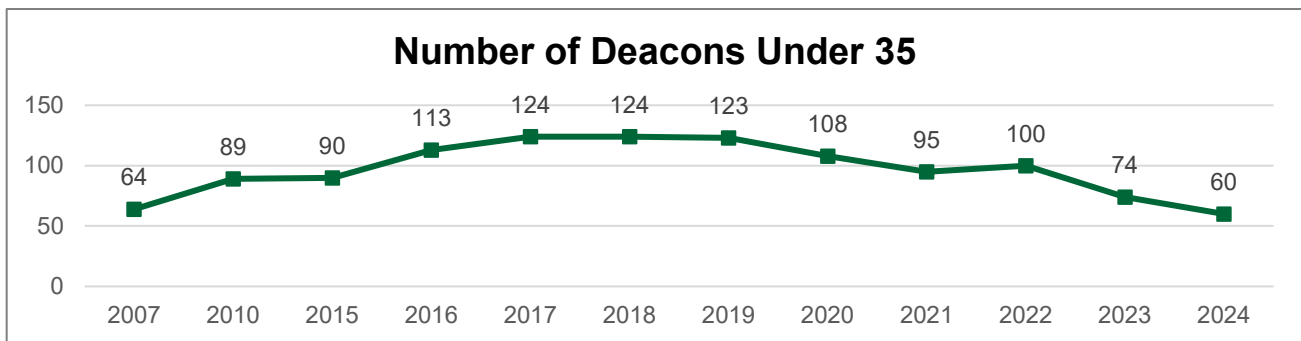
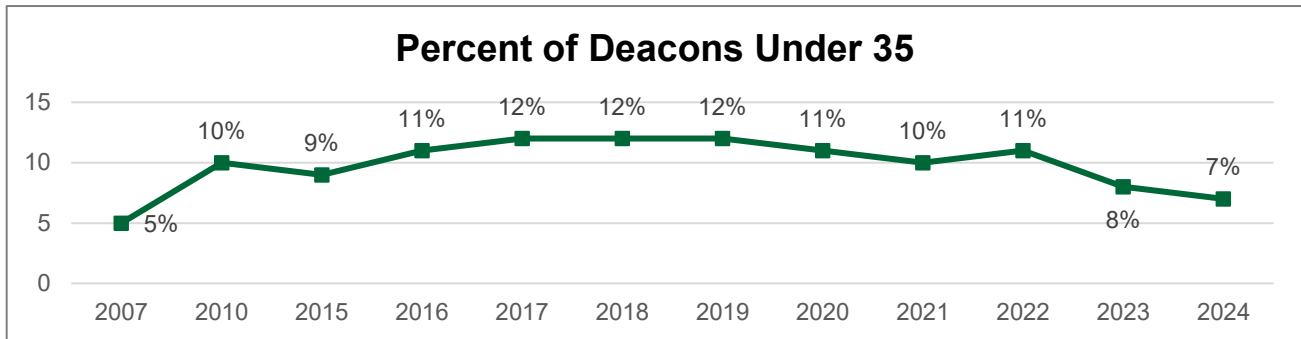
CONFERENCE	2024 Elders under 35	2024 Elders under 35	2024 Elders	2023 Elders under 35	2023 Elders under 35	2023 Elders	2022 Elders under 35	2022 Elders under 35	2022 Elders
Alabama-West Florida	6	6.5%	93	11	6.9%	160	15	8.3%	180
Alaska Missionary	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Arkansas	5	4.0%	125	6	3.9%	152	11	6.3%	175
Baltimore-Washington	11	3.9%	284	13	4.2%	306	17	5.4%	316
California-Nevada	4	2.2%	180	5	2.6%	194	6	3.0%	200
California-Pacific	4	1.6%	252	3	1.1%	269	8	2.8%	285
Central Appalachian	0	0.0%	2	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Central Texas	13	9.8%	133	10	6.8%	148	17	9.0%	189
Dakotas	5	6.5%	77	6	7.0%	86	7	7.6%	92
Desert Southwest	2	3.0%	67	2	2.8%	72	2	2.5%	79
East Ohio	7	4.8%	145	9	4.7%	191	11	5.1%	214
Eastern Pennsylvania	4	2.9%	139	3	1.9%	157	6	3.4%	174
Florida	19	7.1%	268	18	5.5%	330	26	7.4%	349
Great Plains	20	7.5%	266	16	5.8%	278	21	6.9%	306
Greater New Jersey	9	4.3%	211	6	2.7%	219	8	3.4%	238
Holston	10	4.9%	204	12	5.0%	242	15	5.8%	259
Illinois Great Rivers	7	4.3%	162	11	5.5%	200	12	5.7%	211
Indiana	6	2.6%	231	7	2.7%	258	18	5.7%	317
Iowa	10	6.4%	157	10	5.2%	192	12	5.6%	215
Kentucky	5	5.0%	100	9	5.5%	164	14	7.6%	184
Louisiana	6	7.0%	86	8	7.5%	107	11	8.5%	129
Michigan	6	2.8%	215	11	4.2%	260	21	7.6%	278
Minnesota	3	2.9%	105	3	2.5%	119	4	3.1%	131
Mississippi	2	1.2%	172	6	2.4%	245	14	5.3%	264
Missouri	6	3.2%	187	4	1.9%	206	7	3.2%	216
Mountain Sky	8	4.6%	174	10	5.5%	183	12	6.3%	191
New England	6	4.0%	150	5	3.2%	157	10	5.9%	169
New Mexico	1	2.6%	38	0	0.0%	55	0	0.0%	55
New York	5	2.5%	199	4	1.9%	214	5	2.1%	239

**Presence of Elders under 35  
by Annual Conference  
2022-2024, continued**

<b>CONFERENCE</b>	<b>2024 Elders under 35</b>	<b>2024 Elders under 35</b>	<b>2024 Elders</b>	<b>2023 Elders under 35</b>	<b>2023 Elders under 35</b>	<b>2023 Elders</b>	<b>2022 Elders under 35</b>	<b>2022 Elders under 35</b>	<b>2022 Elders</b>
North Alabama	9	6.80%	132	8	5.1%	158	10	5.1%	198
North Carolina	22	9.00%	245	20	7.8%	256	27	8.4%	323
North Georgia	14	4.90%	288	15	4.1%	368	24	5.9%	404
North Texas	16	8.50%	189	17	8.8%	194	24	11.4%	211
Northern Illinois	6	2.80%	217	6	2.6%	230	11	4.6%	239
Northwest Texas	1	5.60%	18	1	4.2%	24	2	3.0%	67
Oklahoma	9	6.30%	143	11	5.7%	192	14	6.3%	221
OK Indian Missionary	0	0.00%	9	0	0.0%	11	0	0.0%	12
Oregon-Idaho	3	4.90%	61	3	4.7%	64	4	5.3%	75
Pacific Northwest	8	6.70%	119	10	7.8%	128	11	8.0%	138
Peninsula-Delaware	3	4.50%	66	4	4.5%	89	3	3.1%	97
Rio Texas	4	3.10%	130	5	2.8%	178	7	3.6%	196
South Carolina	14	5.40%	260	20	6.7%	297	27	8.3%	326
South Georgia	1	1.10%	90	4	2.8%	143	5	2.9%	175
Susquehanna	3	2.50%	121	6	3.8%	160	14	8.5%	165
Tennessee-Western KY	11	5.70%	194	11	5.0%	218	16	6.8%	236
Texas	20	9.80%	204	20	8.8%	227	32	9.0%	356
Upper New York	2	1.40%	146	2	1.2%	170	1	0.5%	182
Virginia	24	5.90%	404	28	6.4%	436	31	6.9%	449
West Ohio	5	1.90%	262	9	2.8%	326	16	4.1%	393
West Virginia	2	1.80%	110	2	1.6%	129	4	2.8%	142
Western North Carolina	21	5.20%	403	21	4.4%	481	32	6.3%	510
Western Pennsylvania	6	4.30%	139	12	5.5%	220	15	6.4%	235
Wisconsin	4	3.00%	133	6	4.1%	147	8	4.9%	163
<b>Total</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>4.7%</b>	<b>8,505</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>4.54%</b>	<b>10,010</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>5.8%</b>	<b>11,168</b>

## Deacons

Deacon numbers include *not only those who have been ordained deacon but also those who have been commissioned* on the deacon track but not yet ordained. Readers should keep in mind that the total number of deacons is significantly lower in this report than their presence in the denomination because more deacons than other clergy work in employment settings with pension plans other than through Wespath.



Trends for Deacons 2005-2024

Year	No. of Deacons	Deacons Under 35	% <35	Deacons 35-54	% 35-54	Deacons 55-72	% 55-72
2005	850	46	5%				
2006	844	52	6%	438	52%	354	42%
2007	902	64	7%	457	51%	381	42%
2008	897	69	8%	441	49%	387	43%
2009	915	77	8%	438	48%	400	44%
2010	930	89	10%	419	45%	422	45%
2015	954	90	9%	398	42%	466	49%
2016	1,003	113	11%	415	41%	475	48%
2017	1,008	124	12%	404	40%	480	48%
2018	999	124	12%	399	40%	476	48%
2019	1,006	123	12%	415	41%	468	47%
2020	983	108	11%	429	44%	446	45%
2021	945	95	10%	431	46%	419	44%
2022	935	100	11%	433	46%	402	43%
2023	906	74	8%	451	50%	381	42%
2024	830	60	7%	441	53%	329	40%

**Median and Average Ages - Deacons**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Median* Age</b>	<b>Average Age</b>
<b>2006</b>	53	52
<b>2007</b>	52	51
<b>2008</b>	53	51
<b>2009</b>	53	51
<b>2010</b>	54	52
<b>2015</b>	54	52
<b>2020</b>	53	51
<b>2021</b>	52	51
<b>2022</b>	52	51
<b>2023</b>	52	51
<b>2024</b>	51	51

\*Median - half older, half younger.

**Gender Breakdown within Age Cohorts  
Deacons**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Under 35</b>	<b>35-54</b>	<b>55-72</b>
<b>2021</b>	<b>Men</b>	28%	31%	22%
	<b>Women</b>	72%	69%	78%
<b>2022</b>	<b>Men</b>	30%	30%	22%
	<b>Women</b>	70%	70%	78%
<b>2023</b>	<b>Men</b>	28%	28%	24%
	<b>Women</b>	72%	72%	76%
<b>2024</b>	<b>Men</b>	32%	28%	20%
	<b>Women</b>	68%	72%	80%

# Deacons

## Presence of Deacons under 35 by Annual Conference 2022-2024

CONFERENCE	2024 Deacons under 35	2024 Deacons under 35	2024 Deacons	2023 Deacons under 35	2023 Deacons under 35	2023 Deacons	2022 Deacons under 35	2022 Deacons under 35	2022 Deacons
Alabama-West Florida	4	14.8%	27	3	9.1%	33	4	12.1%	33
Alaska Missionary	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Arkansas	1	8.3%	12	1	10.0%	10	3	30.0%	10
Baltimore-Washington	0	0.0%	20	1	5.0%	20	0	0.0%	20
California-Nevada	1	8.3%	12	0	0.0%	8	0	0.0%	8
California-Pacific	0	0.0%	9	2	18.2%	11	2	14.3%	14
Central Appalachian	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Central Texas	1	4.0%	25	0	0.0%	25	1	3.7%	27
Dakotas	0	0.0%	4	0	0.0%	3	0	0.0%	6
Desert Southwest	0	0.0%	4	0	0.0%	5	0	0.0%	3
East Ohio	2	14.3%	14	2	14.3%	14	1	7.7%	13
Eastern Pennsylvania	0	0.0%	15	0	0.0%	19	0	0.0%	20
Florida	4	14.8%	27	2	9.1%	22	2	8.3%	24
Great Plains	5	23.8%	21	5	25.0%	20	6	30.0%	20
Greater New Jersey	0	0.0%	9	0	0.0%	9	0	0.0%	10
Holston	1	8.3%	12	1	7.7%	13	0	0.0%	12
Illinois Great Rivers	0	0.0%	15	1	6.3%	16	3	18.8%	16
Indiana	0	0.0%	17	0	0.0%	17	1	5.3%	19
Iowa	0	0.0%	4	0	0.0%	5	0	0.0%	6
Kentucky	0	0.0%	12	0	0.0%	13	0	0.0%	14
Louisiana	1	9.1%	11	2	11.8%	17	1	5.6%	18
Michigan	1	4.3%	23	1	3.6%	28	1	3.8%	26
Minnesota	1	9.1%	11	2	16.7%	12	2	18.2%	11
Mississippi	1	9.1%	11	2	14.3%	14	3	25.0%	12
Missouri	3	12.0%	25	3	11.5%	26	3	11.1%	27
Mountain Sky	0	0.0%	13	0	0.0%	13	0	0.0%	15
New England	1	11.1%	9	1	9.1%	11	1	9.1%	11
New Mexico	0	0.0%	3	0	0.0%	5	0	0.0%	5
New York	2	28.6%	7	1	16.7%	6	1	14.3%	7

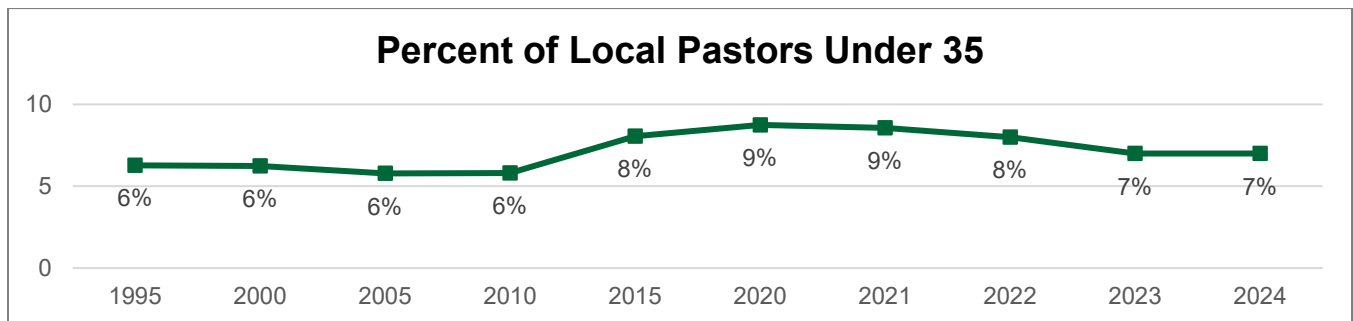
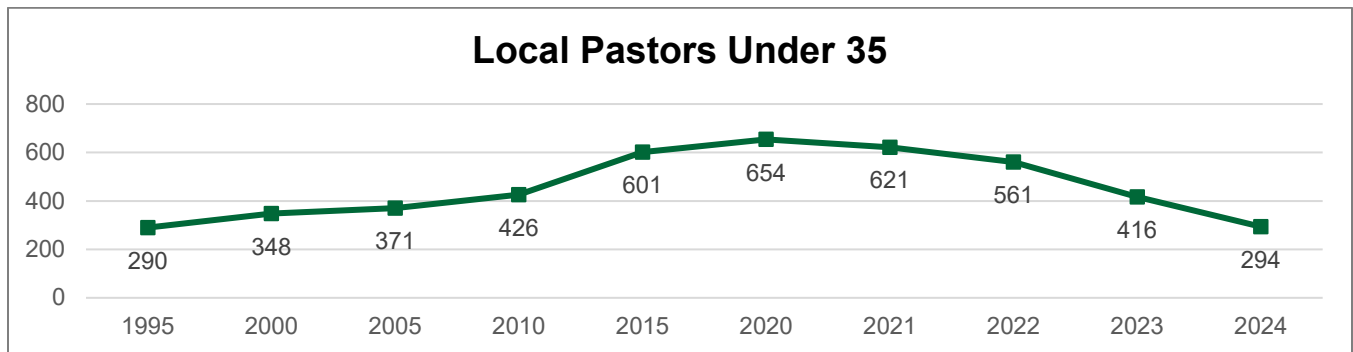
# Deacons

## Presence of Deacons under 35 by Annual Conference 2022-2024, continued

CONFERENCE	2024 Deacons under 35	2024 Deacons under 35	2024 Deacons	2023 Deacons under 35	2023 Deacons under 35	2023 Deacons	2022 Deacons under 35	2022 Deacons under 35	2022 Deacons
North Alabama	0	0.00%	11	2	16.7%	12	2	13.3%	15
North Carolina	3	12.00%	25	4	15.4%	26	2	8.3%	24
North Georgia	1	1.90%	52	2	3.3%	60	6	9.5%	63
North Texas	5	11.90%	42	7	15.2%	46	9	17.6%	51
Northern Illinois	0	0.00%	23	0	0.0%	23	1	4.8%	21
Northwest Texas	0	0.00%	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Oklahoma	0	0.00%	9	1	7.7%	13	0	0.0%	19
OK Indian Missionary	0	0.00%	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Oregon-Idaho	0	0.00%	8	0	0.0%	8	0	0.0%	6
Pacific Northwest	0	0.00%	8	0	0.0%	8	1	12.5%	8
Peninsula-Delaware	0	0.00%	3	0	0.0%	3	0	0.0%	3
Rio Texas	1	5.60%	18	1	5.3%	19	0	0.0%	19
South Carolina	1	4.50%	22	2	8.7%	23	4	17.4%	23
South Georgia	0	0.00%	9	0	0.0%	12	2	14.3%	14
Susquehanna	0	0.00%	2	0	0.0%	1	0	0.0%	3
Tenn.-Western KY	2	4.40%	45	5	10.2%	49	8	17.8%	45
Texas	0	0.00%	23	0	0.0%	28	4	12.9%	31
Upper New York	1	7.10%	14	2	11.8%	17	2	11.1%	18
Virginia	4	12.90%	31	4	12.1%	33	4	12.9%	31
West Ohio	1	3.70%	27	1	3.6%	28	3	9.1%	33
West Virginia	0	0.00%	7	0	0.0%	8	0	0.0%	9
Western NC	8	13.30%	60	9	12.3%	73	9	12.7%	71
Western Penn.	3	37.50%	8	3	33.3%	9	7	58.3%	12
Wisconsin	1	9.10%	11	1	8.3%	12	1	11.1%	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>7.2%</b>	<b>830</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>8.2%</b>	<b>906</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>10.7%</b>	<b>935</b>

## Local Pastors

Local pastor numbers include both full-time and part-time local pastors. Associate members are also included in these numbers.



**Trends for Local Pastors 1985-2024**

Year	No. of Local Pastors	Local Pastors Under 35	% Under 35	Local Pastors 35-54	% 35-54	Local Pastors 55-72	% 55-72
1985	3,804	130	3%	2,212	58%	1,462	38%
1990	3,936	163	4%	2,244	57%	1,529	39%
1995	4,622	290	6%	2,641	57%	1,691	37%
2000	5,571	348	6%	3,109	56%	2,114	38%
2005	6,517	371	6%	3,213	49%	2,933	45%
2010	7,341	426	6%	2,932	40%	3,983	54%
2015	7,464	601	8%	2,579	35%	4,284	57%
2020	7,478	654	9%	2,546	34%	4,278	57%
2021	7,246	621	8.6%	2,440	33.7%	4,185	57.8%
2022	6,923	561	8%	2,352	34%	4,010	58%
2023	6,107	416	7%	2,155	35%	3,536	58%
2024	4,483	294	7%	1,616	36%	2,573	57%

**Median and Average Ages – Local Pastors**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Median Age</b>	<b>Average Age</b>
1985	51	50
1990	51	50
1995	51	50
2000	52	51
2005	53	52
2010	55	54
2015	57	54
2020	57	54
2021	57	54
2022	57	55
2023	58	55
2024	58	55

\* Median – half older, half younger

**Gender Breakdown within Age Cohorts  
Local Pastors**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Under 35</b>	<b>35-54</b>	<b>55-72</b>
2021	Men	73%	70%	63%
	Women	27%	30%	37%
2022	Men	73%	70%	62%
	Women	27%	30%	38%
2023	Men	71%	67%	60%
	Women	29%	33%	40%
2023	Men	67%	63%	57%
	Women	33%	37%	43%



## Local Pastors

### Presence of Local Pastors under 35 by Annual Conference 2022-2024

CONFERENCE	2024 Local Pastors under 35	2024 Local Pastors under 35	2024 Local Pastors	2023 Local Pastors under 35	2023 Local Pastors under 35	2023 Local Pastors	2022 Local Pastors under 35	2022 Local Pastors under 35	2022 Local Pastors
Alabama-West Florida	8	11.0%	73	13	11.0%	118	15	10.8%	139
Alaska Missionary	0	0.0%	4	1	20.0%	5	1	20.0%	5
Arkansas	6	10.5%	57	4	6.0%	67	1	1.2%	83
Baltimore-Washington	1	1.1%	94	2	1.9%	104	7	6.4%	110
California-Nevada	0	0.0%	46	2	4.2%	48	3	6.1%	49
California-Pacific	5	7.8%	64	7	9.6%	73	9	11.1%	81
Central Appalachian	0	0.0%	2	0	0.0%	4	1	20.0%	5
Central Texas	1	4.0%	25	8	17.4%	46	9	12.5%	72
Dakotas	6	11.8%	51	7	9.6%	73	11	14.7%	75
Desert Southwest	1	3.6%	28	2	7.4%	27	1	3.4%	29
East Ohio	4	4.7%	86	6	3.6%	166	12	6.7%	178
Eastern Pennsylvania	6	5.7%	106	7	6.4%	109	8	7.0%	114
Florida	6	6.0%	100	11	6.5%	168	15	8.5%	176
Great Plains	7	5.0%	141	15	8.0%	187	16	8.0%	201
Greater New Jersey	10	7.3%	137	16	10.1%	158	18	11.4%	158
Holston	4	6.3%	63	5	4.9%	102	10	9.3%	107
Illinois Great Rivers	8	5.5%	145	10	5.8%	172	13	7.1%	183
Indiana	7	5.9%	118	11	7.3%	151	14	8.0%	175
Iowa	5	6.1%	82	3	2.5%	118	4	3.3%	123
Kentucky	9	9.5%	95	20	11.7%	171	20	9.9%	202
Louisiana	1	1.7%	59	4	4.6%	87	4	3.6%	110
Michigan	7	5.4%	130	5	3.0%	166	11	6.4%	172
Minnesota	6	7.2%	83	7	8.2%	85	11	13.1%	84
Mississippi	5	3.9%	129	8	4.1%	196	13	6.2%	209
Missouri	6	4.1%	148	11	5.8%	191	17	8.2%	207
Mountain Sky	4	7.1%	56	2	3.3%	60	5	7.4%	68
New England	2	2.2%	92	4	3.9%	102	7	6.2%	113
New Mexico	1	5.9%	17	2	10.5%	19	2	10.5%	19
New York	1	2.4%	41	3	5.8%	52	5	9.4%	53

## Local Pastors

### Presence of Local Pastors under 35 by Annual Conference 2022-2024, continued

CONFERENCE	2024 Local Pastors under 35	2024 Local Pastors under 35	2024 Local Pastors	2023 Local Pastors under 35	2023 Local Pastors under 35	2023 Local Pastors	2022 Local Pastors under 35	2022 Local Pastors under 35	2022 Local Pastors
North Alabama	10	12.0%	83	15	11.3%	133	26	11.9%	219
North Carolina	22	19.6%	112	29	20.4%	142	39	15.7%	248
North Georgia	17	12.1%	141	17	7.5%	226	21	8.2%	255
North Texas	6	9.7%	62	5	7.4%	68	6	7.4%	81
Northern Illinois	3	6.3%	48	2	3.9%	51	5	8.6%	58
Northwest Texas	0	0.0%	15	3	11.5%	26	8	12.7%	63
Oklahoma	7	9.6%	73	10	10.1%	99	16	13.9%	115
OK Indian Missionary	1	12.5%	8	1	10.0%	10	0	0.0%	10
Oregon-Idaho	6	30.0%	20	6	25.0%	24	4	19.0%	21
Pacific Northwest	1	5.6%	18	2	8.0%	25	2	7.4%	27
Peninsula-Delaware	5	7.2%	69	6	5.8%	104	8	7.3%	110
Rio Texas	8	8.5%	94	8	6.5%	124	1	4.0%	125
South Carolina	6	2.8%	214	7	2.9%	245	5	5.2%	252
South Georgia	3	6.3%	48	7	6.7%	104	13	5.6%	124
Susquehanna	6	4.5%	134	11	6.0%	183	7	7.4%	188
Tennessee- Western KY	5	4.2%	119	5	2.7%	186	14	4.3%	211
Texas	8	14.3%	56	10	14.3%	70	9	12.0%	158
Upper New York	5	3.5%	143	7	3.8%	186	19	3.6%	193
Virginia	11	5.7%	194	19	7.3%	262	7	8.2%	282
West Ohio	9	6.7%	135	16	6.9%	231	23	8.8%	261
West Virginia	9	6.7%	134	8	5.2%	155	23	5.7%	158
Western North Carolina	15	11.7%	128	18	10.5%	171	9	11.2%	205
Western Pennsylvania	1	1.3%	80	5	3.0%	164	23	3.0%	165
Wisconsin	3	3.6%	83	3	3.2%	93	5	6.4%	94
<b>Total</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>4,483</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>6.8%</b>	<b>6,107</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>8.1%</b>	<b>6,923</b>

## Annual Conference Clergy by Age Group – Numeric – 2024

CONFERENCE	Deacons				Elders				Local Pastors			
	Under 35	35 to 54	55 to 72	Total	Under 35	35 to 54	55 to 72	Total	Under 35	35 to 54	55 to 72	Total
Alabama-West Florida	4	12	11	27	6	45	42	93	8	20	45	73
Alaska Missionary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	4
Arkansas	1	6	5	12	5	65	55	125	6	17	34	57
Baltimore-Washington	0	11	9	20	11	116	157	284	1	28	65	94
California-Nevada	1	6	5	12	4	65	111	180	0	24	22	46
Central Appalachian	0	4	5	9	4	105	143	252	5	24	35	64
California-Pacific	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	2	2
Central Texas	1	15	9	25	13	56	64	133	1	14	10	25
Dakotas	0	3	1	4	5	43	29	77	6	26	19	51
Desert Southwest	0	1	3	4	2	32	33	67	1	6	21	28
East Ohio	2	5	7	14	7	60	78	145	4	34	48	86
Eastern Pennsylvania	0	6	9	15	4	49	86	139	6	38	62	106
Florida	4	15	8	27	19	130	119	268	6	35	59	100
Great Plains	5	8	8	21	20	132	114	266	7	61	73	141
Greater New Jersey	0	4	5	9	9	92	110	211	10	61	66	137
Holston	1	3	8	12	10	103	91	204	4	25	34	63
Illinois Great Rivers	0	10	5	15	7	62	93	162	8	48	89	145
Indiana	0	13	4	17	6	101	124	231	7	50	61	118
Iowa	0	1	3	4	10	64	83	157	5	34	43	82
Kentucky	0	5	7	12	5	50	45	100	9	44	42	95
Louisiana	1	6	4	11	6	38	42	86	1	25	33	59
Michigan	1	13	9	23	6	100	109	215	7	52	71	130
Minnesota	1	7	3	11	3	47	55	105	6	29	48	83
Mississippi	1	7	3	11	2	80	90	172	5	41	83	129
Missouri	3	13	9	25	6	97	84	187	6	61	81	148
Mountain Sky	0	4	9	13	8	80	86	174	4	22	30	56
New England	1	6	2	9	6	68	76	150	2	29	61	92
New Mexico	0	2	1	3	1	16	21	38	1	5	11	17
New York	2	2	3	7	5	70	124	199	1	16	24	41

## Annual Conference Clergy by Age Group – Numeric – 2024 (continued)

CONFERENCE	Deacons				Elders				Local Pastors			
	Under 35	35 to 54	55 to 72	Total	Under 35	35 to 54	55 to 72	Total	Under 35	35 to 54	55 to 72	Total
North Alabama	0	7	4	11	9	66	57	132	10	30	43	83
North Carolina	3	16	6	25	22	121	102	245	22	31	59	112
North Georgia	1	26	25	52	14	140	134	288	17	42	82	141
North Texas	5	24	13	42	16	87	86	189	6	28	28	62
Northern Illinois	0	16	7	23	6	96	115	217	3	21	24	48
Northwest Texas	0	0	0	0	1	7	10	18	0	6	9	15
Oklahoma	0	5	4	9	9	62	72	143	7	26	40	73
OK Indian Mission	0	0	0	0	0	2	7	9	1	2	5	8
Oregon-Idaho	0	5	3	8	3	29	29	61	6	6	8	20
Pacific Northwest	0	5	3	8	8	58	53	119	1	8	9	18
Peninsula-Delaware	0	3	0	3	3	20	43	66	5	22	42	69
Rio Texas	1	11	6	18	4	61	65	130	8	42	44	94
South Carolina	1	10	11	22	14	97	149	260	6	55	153	214
South Georgia	0	4	5	9	1	39	50	90	3	11	34	48
Susquehanna	0	0	2	2	3	46	72	121	6	52	76	134
Tenn.-Western KY	2	29	14	45	11	93	90	194	5	44	70	119
Texas	0	16	7	23	20	104	80	204	8	24	24	56
Upper New York	1	3	10	14	2	53	91	146	5	42	96	143
Virginia	4	16	11	31	24	215	165	404	11	64	119	194
West Ohio	1	17	9	27	5	113	144	262	9	53	73	135
West Virginia	0	1	6	7	2	43	65	110	9	44	81	134
West. N Carolina	8	30	22	60	21	181	201	403	15	30	83	128
West. Pennsylvania	3	3	2	8	6	53	80	139	1	26	53	80
Wisconsin	1	6	4	11	4	59	70	133	3	36	44	83
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>441</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>830</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>3813</b>	<b>4294</b>	<b>8505</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>1616</b>	<b>2573</b>	<b>4483</b>

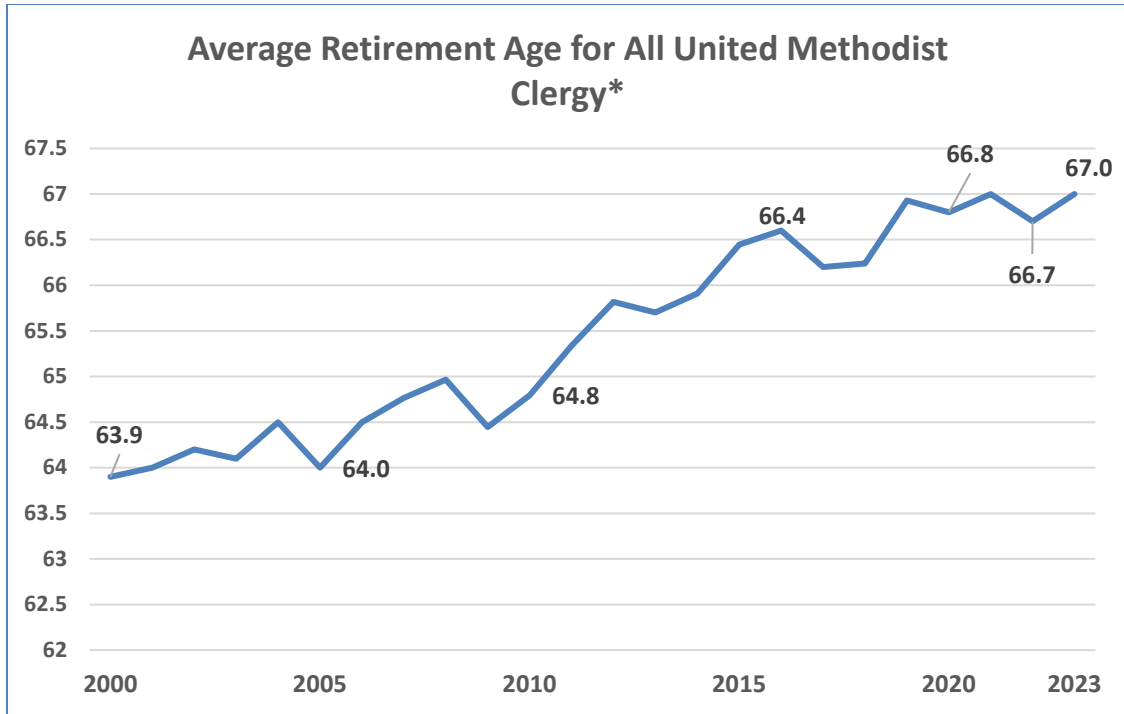
## Annual Conference Clergy by Age Group – Percentage – 2024

CONFERENCE	Deacons			Elders			Local Pastors		
	Under 35	35 to 54	55 to 72	Under 35	35 to 54	55 to 72	Under 35	35 to 54	55 to 72
Alabama-West Florida	14.8%	44.4%	40.7%	6.5%	48.4%	45.2%	11.0%	27.4%	61.6%
Alaska Missionary	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Arkansas	8.3%	50.0%	41.7%	4.0%	52.0%	44.0%	10.5%	29.8%	59.6%
Baltimore-Washington	0.0%	55.0%	45.0%	3.9%	40.8%	55.3%	1.1%	29.8%	69.1%
California-Nevada	8.3%	50.0%	41.7%	2.2%	36.1%	61.7%	0.0%	52.2%	47.8%
California-Pacific	0.0%	44.4%	55.6%	1.6%	41.7%	56.7%	7.8%	37.5%	54.7%
Central Appalachian	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Central Texas	4.0%	60.0%	36.0%	9.8%	42.1%	48.1%	4.0%	56.0%	40.0%
Dakotas	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%	6.5%	55.8%	37.7%	11.8%	51.0%	37.3%
Desert Southwest	0.0%	25.0%	75.0%	3.0%	47.8%	49.3%	3.6%	21.4%	75.0%
East Ohio	14.3%	35.7%	50.0%	4.8%	41.4%	53.8%	4.7%	39.5%	55.8%
Eastern Pennsylvania	0.0%	40.0%	60.0%	2.9%	35.3%	61.9%	5.7%	35.8%	58.5%
Florida	14.8%	55.6%	29.6%	7.1%	48.5%	44.4%	6.0%	35.0%	59.0%
Great Plains	23.8%	38.1%	38.1%	7.5%	49.6%	42.9%	5.0%	43.3%	51.8%
Greater New Jersey	0.0%	44.4%	55.6%	4.3%	43.6%	52.1%	7.3%	44.5%	48.2%
Holston	8.3%	25.0%	66.7%	4.9%	50.5%	44.6%	6.3%	39.7%	54.0%
Illinois Great Rivers	0.0%	66.7%	33.3%	4.3%	38.3%	57.4%	5.5%	33.1%	61.4%
Indiana	0.0%	76.5%	23.5%	2.6%	43.7%	53.7%	5.9%	42.4%	51.7%
Iowa	0.0%	25.0%	75.0%	6.4%	40.8%	52.9%	6.1%	41.5%	52.4%
Kentucky	0.0%	41.7%	58.3%	5.0%	50.0%	45.0%	9.5%	46.3%	44.2%
Louisiana	9.1%	54.5%	36.4%	7.0%	44.2%	48.8%	1.7%	42.4%	55.9%
Michigan	4.3%	56.5%	39.1%	2.8%	46.5%	50.7%	5.4%	40.0%	54.6%
Minnesota	9.1%	63.6%	27.3%	2.9%	44.8%	52.4%	7.2%	34.9%	57.8%
Mississippi	9.1%	63.6%	27.3%	1.2%	46.5%	52.3%	3.9%	31.8%	64.3%
Missouri	12.0%	52.0%	36.0%	3.2%	51.9%	44.9%	4.1%	41.2%	54.7%
Mountain Sky	0.0%	30.8%	69.2%	4.6%	46.0%	49.4%	7.1%	39.3%	53.6%
New England	11.1%	66.7%	22.2%	4.0%	45.3%	50.7%	2.2%	31.5%	66.3%
New Mexico	0.0%	66.7%	33.3%	2.6%	42.1%	55.3%	5.9%	29.4%	64.7%
New York	28.6%	28.6%	42.9%	2.5%	35.2%	62.3%	2.4%	39.0%	58.5%

## Annual Conference Clergy by Age Group – Percentage – 2024 (continued)

CONFERENCE	Deacons			Elders			Local Pastors		
	Under 35	35 to 54	55 to 72	Under 35	35 to 54	55 to 72	Under 35	35 to 54	55 to 72
North Alabama	0.0%	63.6%	36.4%	6.8%	50.0%	43.2%	12.0%	36.1%	51.8%
North Carolina	12.0%	64.0%	24.0%	9.0%	49.4%	41.6%	19.6%	27.7%	52.7%
North Georgia	1.9%	50.0%	48.1%	4.9%	48.6%	46.5%	12.1%	29.8%	58.2%
North Texas	11.9%	57.1%	31.0%	8.5%	46.0%	45.5%	9.7%	45.2%	45.2%
Northern Illinois	0.0%	69.6%	30.4%	2.8%	44.2%	53.0%	6.3%	43.8%	50.0%
Northwest Texas	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%	38.9%	55.6%	0.0%	40.0%	60.0%
Oklahoma	0.0%	55.6%	44.4%	6.3%	43.4%	50.3%	9.6%	35.6%	54.8%
OK Indian Mission	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	22.2%	77.8%	12.5%	25.0%	62.5%
Oregon-Idaho	0.0%	62.5%	37.5%	4.9%	47.5%	47.5%	30.0%	30.0%	40.0%
Pacific Northwest	0.0%	62.5%	37.5%	6.7%	48.7%	44.5%	5.6%	44.4%	50.0%
Peninsula-Delaware	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	4.5%	30.3%	65.2%	7.2%	31.9%	60.9%
Rio Texas	5.6%	61.1%	33.3%	3.1%	46.9%	50.0%	8.5%	44.7%	46.8%
South Carolina	4.5%	45.5%	50.0%	5.4%	37.3%	57.3%	2.8%	25.7%	71.5%
South Georgia	0.0%	44.4%	55.6%	1.1%	43.3%	55.6%	6.3%	22.9%	70.8%
Susquehanna	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	2.5%	38.0%	59.5%	4.5%	38.8%	56.7%
Tenn.-Western KY	4.4%	64.4%	31.1%	5.7%	47.9%	46.4%	4.2%	37.0%	58.8%
Texas	0.0%	69.6%	30.4%	9.8%	51.0%	39.2%	14.3%	42.9%	42.9%
Upper New York	7.1%	21.4%	71.4%	1.4%	36.3%	62.3%	3.5%	29.4%	67.1%
Virginia	12.9%	51.6%	35.5%	5.9%	53.2%	40.8%	5.7%	33.0%	61.3%
West Ohio	3.7%	63.0%	33.3%	1.9%	43.1%	55.0%	6.7%	39.3%	54.1%
West Virginia	0.0%	14.3%	85.7%	1.8%	39.1%	59.1%	6.7%	32.8%	60.4%
West. North Carolina	13.3%	50.0%	36.7%	5.2%	44.9%	49.9%	11.7%	23.4%	64.8%
West. Pennsylvania	37.5%	37.5%	25.0%	4.3%	38.1%	57.6%	1.3%	32.5%	66.3%
Wisconsin	9.1%	54.5%	36.4%	3.0%	44.4%	52.6%	3.6%	43.4%	53.0%

# Retirement Age Trends



\*includes Jurisdictional and Central Conferences

### Average Retirement Ages

	2005	2022
<b>Elders</b>	64	66
<b>Deacons</b>	64	68
<b>Full-Time Local Pastors**</b>	65	68
<b>Part-Time Local Pastors</b>	67	69

\*\*includes Associate Members

## Lewis Center for Church Leadership

### About the Lewis Center for Church Leadership

Established by Wesley Theological Seminary in 2003, the Lewis Center for Church Leadership helps the United Methodist Church address its current challenges. The Center is building a vision for church leadership grounded in faith, informed by knowledge, and exercised in effective action. It seeks a holistic understanding of Christian leadership that brings together theology and management, scholarship and practice, research and application.

Committed to the broad goal of helping the church reach more people, younger people, and more diverse people, the Center focuses on improving leadership effectiveness and providing actionable insights and best practices to promote effective ministry. The Center seeks to be a trusted resource for church leaders so that congregations increase in service, vitality, and growth. The Center staff of six, along with other researchers and consultants who assist with special projects, also draws on the expertise of the entire Wesley Seminary faculty and a wide array of gifted practitioners.

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