



For Immediate Release  
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### **Gretchen Hastings Named Managing Director of Connectional Relations**

LAKELAND – Gretchen Hastings will join the Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church as the Managing Director of Connectional Relations. Ms. Hastings will assume her new responsibilities by August 30. In this role, she will provide strategic direction and leadership for the Conference connectional relations ministry, according to Rev. Beth Fogle-Miller, the Director of Connectional Ministries. “This is part of an ongoing effort to increase the effectiveness, efficiency, and responsiveness of the Conference staff,” she said.

“This critical position will focus on strengthening the service, training, and support provided by the connectional ministry area to other Conference ministries, district offices, and local church leaders,” said Fogle-Miller. “Key responsibilities include oversight of all communication processes, including the website, implementing effective communication strategies, shaping content that reaches target audiences, and building strong relationships among and with stakeholders in the Conference.”

Prior to joining the Florida Conference, Ms. Hastings served as an internal and external consultant in the private sector, specializing in public affairs, strategic planning, training and development, and organizational effectiveness. Most recently, she led a workplace transformation initiative for HDR, Inc., a professional services firm.

During the past decade, she served three months as an individual Volunteer-in-Mission for the United Methodist Committee on Relief’s (UMCOR) mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and she provided strategic planning services for UMCOR’s headquarters, as well as for UMCOR’s Non-Governmental Organization (NGO). Other non-profit consulting projects included program evaluations for UMCOR-NGO in Albania and Bosnia-Herzegovina and strategic planning for CARE.

Frank North, Interim Director of Connectional Relations, will remain in that position until Ms. Hastings’ arrival in late August.

Contact: Beth Fogle-Miller, Director of Connectional Ministries  
[Beth.fogle-miller@flumc.org](mailto:Beth.fogle-miller@flumc.org)