

## Conference Schedule

### Friday - January 26, 2018

**8:30** Registration (breakfast snacks)

**9:00** Opening Worship

**9:30** Unity and Diversity:

Inviting the Holy Spirit Into the Dance  
(Melanie Gordon)

**10:45** Break

**11:00** Unity and Diversity:

Inviting the Holy Spirit Into the Dance  
(Melanie Gordon)

**12:30** Lunch (catered)

**1:15** Neither Gentile nor Jew  
Imagine - Panel

**2:45** Break

**3:00** Bullying:

A Christian Response (Melanie Gordon)

**5:00** Dismiss for evening

Evening on your own in Little Rock!

### Saturday - January 27, 2018

**8:30** Registration (breakfast snacks)

**9:00** Worship

**9:30** Violence:

A Christian Response  
(Melanie Gordon)

**10:45** Break

**11:15** What Every Child Should Experience  
in United Methodist Congregations  
(Melanie Gordon)

**12:30** So Long, Farewell,  
Auf Wiedersehen, Goodbye.

All handouts, links and Powerpoints for this  
year's Beyond conference can be found at

<https://wp.me/P1OwMM-1iM>

Starting February 1, 2018



**January 26-27, 2018**

Philander Smith College

Little Rock, Arkansas



In light of the current atmosphere of intolerance and fear in our country, it is important that we teach our children a different way of being in the world; the way of Jesus. Melanie Gordon, Director of Children's Ministries for the national Discipleship Ministries of the United Methodist Church will be leading participants in insightful and hands-on explorations of creating *Unity through Diversity*.

**2018 Beyond is sponsored by:**



**Arkansas Conference Children's Ministry**

**800 Daisy Bates Drive**

**Little Rock, AR 72202**

More information at:

[kidz.arumc.org](http://kidz.arumc.org)

## Conference Leader: Melanie Gordon

Director, Ministry with Children  
Leadership Ministries – Discipleship Ministries of  
the United Methodist Church

In her position at Discipleship Ministries, Melanie is responsible to The United Methodist Church for Providing nationwide training and resourcing, and does research and networking for leaders and teachers engaged in ministry for children, including faith formation, weekday ministries, worship, Safe Sanctuaries®, and advocacy.



Melanie wrote, *What Every Child Should Experience: A Guide for Teachers and Leaders in United Methodist Congregations, Children's Ministry Guidelines for the 2013--16 Quadrennium*, and co-authored *Guidelines for Weekday Preschool Ministry Programs in United Methodist Churches*. She also blogs regularly, on issues that impact how children grow in faith.

Prior to joining the Discipleship Ministries staff, Melanie earned a Master of Church Ministries degree with an emphasis in Spiritual Formation from Duke Divinity School. While at Duke, she worked at Duke Hospital Center on Aging; co--founded the improvisational comedy group "Axe of the Apostles"; went on pilgrimage to East Africa, creating and producing a documentary film on the *Christian Response to Genocide in Rwanda*; served as Chaplain at a feeding ministry in Harlem; and developed curriculum for The United Methodist Home for Children in Raleigh, North Carolina. Melanie earned a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education from Clemson..

Melanie is a member of the South Carolina Annual Conference and John Wesley UMC in Greenville, South Carolina.

## Keynote and Class Descriptions

**Unity and Diversity: Inviting the Holy Spirit into the Dance** – Our children who live in a world wrestling with identity of community and who belongs in the community, and they look to us for a sense of belonging as we struggle with these same issues as adults. Unity and diversity occur simultaneously when the Holy Spirit is mentioned in the New Testament, so we need to embrace how our differences unite us. How can we help our children understand that we are not a single story, but we are woven together and made stronger through the gift of being "fearfully and wonderfully made"?

**Bullying: A Christian Response** – *Supporting our children in a violent world* – The media continues to be filled with stories of children taking their own lives in response to relentless bullying. Bullying goes against the teachings of Jesus Christ, the General Rules of the Methodist Church, and the Golden Rule that is recognized in religions the world over. This workshop will explore approaches that we can use to encourage and support healthy environments and relationships for children in the nursery, preschool, Sunday school, and in other areas of ministry with children.

**Violence: A Christian Response** – *Supporting our children in a violent world* – Sadly, we live in an unsettled world, and the media continues to be filled with stories of children caught in the crossfire of violence. Violence against anyone, especially those most vulnerable, goes against the teachings of Jesus Christ, the General Rules of The United Methodist Church, and the Golden Rule that is recognized in religions the world over. This workshop will explore the culture of violence, and offer approaches that we can use to encourage and support healthy environments and relationships for children in the church and community.

**What Every Child Should Experience in United Methodist Congregations** – *The basics of what we should teach children* – What do children need to know and experience? What is developmentally appropriate? How do you teach the Beatitudes to four-year-olds? This workshop, for leaders and teachers of children in the area of faith formation, covers scripture significant for children as they develop cognitively and theologically, and what children need and understand developmentally around the beliefs and concepts of God, Worship, The Bible, Home and Family, Everyday Life, Community and Wesleyan Heritage.

## Location

**Philander Smith College  
Little Rock, Arkansas**

900 W Daisy L Gatson Bates Dr,  
Little Rock, AR 72202  
(501) 375-9845

[philander.edu](http://philander.edu)

**GPS Coordinates** 34.7378016, -92.2850561

Founded in 1877, Philander Smith College is a small, privately supported, historically Black, four-year liberal arts institution related to the Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church.

## Cost - \$35

Registration fee includes 1 meal and snacks, and all materials and supplies needed for each session. The first 20 people who register for this conference will also receive a *Children of God Storybook Bible* by Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

## Register at:

<https://tinyurl.com/b18register>