

This Week in Eden History

June 5 | Bishop Judith Craig



Judith Craig (right) with Kristen Leslie, 1993 / Photo courtesy Kristen Leslie

Bishop Judith Craig, the third woman bishop in the United Methodist Church, was born on **June 5, 1937** in Lexington, Missouri (died Jan. 18, 2019, Columbus, Ohio). She attended William Jewell College, Eden Theological Seminary (Master of Christian Education, 1961) and Union Theological Seminary. She was ordained in 1972 and served congregations in the East Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church.

The North Central Jurisdictional Conference elected Judith to the episcopacy in 1984. She was assigned to the Michigan Area 1984–1992 and to the Ohio West Area 1992–2000. During her time in the episcopacy, she served on the UMC Commission on the Status and Role of Women (1984–88), the General Council on Ministries (1988–92), and the General Board of Publications.

Bishop Craig, in retirement, was bishop in residence and visiting professor of leadership at Methodist Theological Seminary in Ohio and established the Bishop Judith Craig Children's Village in Liberia to house and educate orphans of that country's civil war.

Bishop Craig was a mentor to many during her time at Methodist Theological School in Ohio and UMC bishop, especially to LGBT and women students and pastors, including Eden's own Professor Kristen Leslie.