

A Lewis Center Report on
**Clergy Age Trends in the
United Methodist Church**
2026 Report

Elders • Deacons • Local Pastors

2026 Report

Lewis Center for Church Leadership
Wesley Theological Seminary



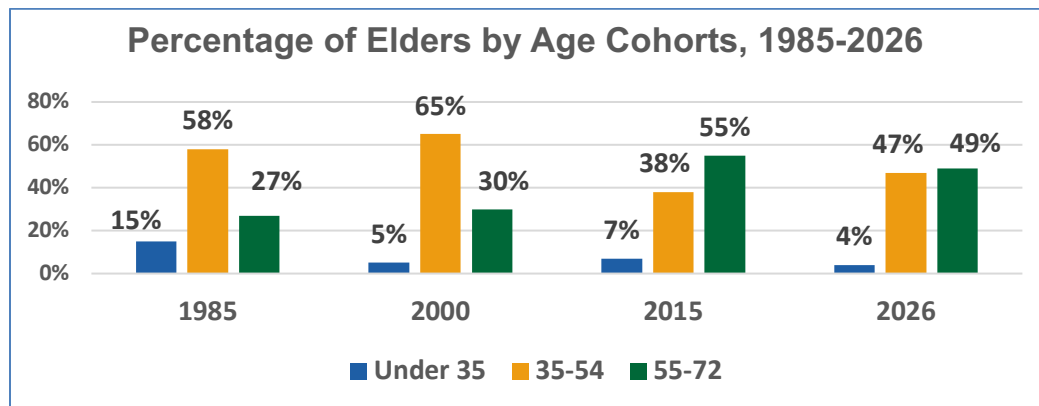
Lewis Center
for Church Leadership

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Highlights of the 2026 Report

Ages of Elders Rebalancing Except for Young Elders

Notice in the chart below the change between 2000 and 2015 when the percentage of elders between 35 and 54 dropped from 65 percent in 2000 to 38 percent in 2015, with the percentage of elders between 55 and 72 increasing from 30 percent in 2000 to 55 percent in 2015. *This major adjustment in the elder makeup reflected the aging of the historically large baby boom generation.* In 2000, the youngest boomer was 36, and the oldest was 54. By 2015, the youngest boomer was 51, and the oldest was 69. By 2026, there is a rebalancing of the middle and older age cohorts. In 2026, elders between 35 and 54 are relatively close to that age group's presence in the total population between 25 and 72. Older elders are still disproportionately represented compared to the same general population pool. Young elders below the age of 35 continue to be represented well below the presence of their age group among the general population ages 25 to 72.



Elder Median Age and Gender Makeup Relatively Stable

The median age of elders (half older, half younger) remains at 55 in 2026. Annual conferences with the lowest median ages are Alabama-West Florida and North Carolina (50); Dakotas, Kentucky, North Alabama, and Texas (51). Those with the highest median ages are Oklahoma Indian Missionary (61), Peninsula Delaware (60), and New York (59). The gender makeup among elders 35 and older has remained relatively stable at around 60 percent male and 40 percent female. Elders younger than 35 include a higher percentage of women, with the highest percentage recorded in 2026 at 45 percent. The increased percentage in the last couple of years has not come from an increase in young female elders but rather the decreases of young women elders has been smaller than the decrease in male young elders.

Deacons Are Younger and An Increasing Portion of Clergy

The number of deacons and young deacons remained about the same in 2026. The age makeup of deacons is much more representative of the general population than the age makeup of elders or local pastors. Deacons are more proportionately representative relative to elders than was previously the case. In 2005, there was one deacon for every 21 elders. In 2026, there is one deacon for every 10 elders. Not all deacons have their pensions through Wespeth, in which case they are not in the data available. Conferences with the most deacons are Horizon Texas (64), Western North Carolina (55), and North Georgia (49).

There Are Fewer Local Pastors

Between 2000 and 2026 there was a dramatic decline in local pastors. In 2026, there are 48 percent fewer local pastors and 65 percent fewer under-35 local pastors. However, the ratio of elders to local pastors remains about the same, with about two elders per local pastor. Men account for two-thirds of young local pastors, but there are more women with each older age cohort until the makeup of men and women is about even in the 55-72 age group. Since conference policies vary on including part-time local pastors in pension plans, some local pastors do not have pension accounts at Wespeth, in which case they are not in the data available. Conferences with the most local pastors are Virginia (180), Missouri (141), and Great Plains (137).

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 2026.

This report is made possible through partnership with the denominational pension agency, Wespeth. The Lewis Center for Church Leadership works with Wespeth 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 Wespeth. For local pastors, both full-time and part-time local pastors are included. Since Wespeth 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 Wespeth, and the staff, particularly Eloy Cerenil, provided essential cooperation and data.

Young Clergy Trends

Young Elders

- The number of under-35 elders decreased from 364 to 317, continuing a ten-year decline.
- The decline in young men was greater than that of young women among elders so the proportion of clergywomen among young elders is now higher than ever before at 45 percent.
- The percentage of young elders among all active elders declined slightly from 4.55 percent last year to 4.17 percent in 2026.
- The Alabama-West Florida Conference had the highest percentage of young elders at 11.8 percent.
- The Western North Carolina Conference had the largest number of young elders with 24.
- **The Top Ten Conferences by percentage**
 1. Alabama-West Florida (#1 for the first time)
 2. North Carolina (#1 in 2025)
 3. Dakotas
 4. North Alabama (new to Top Ten this year)
 5. Oklahoma (#1 in 2011)
 6. Horizon Texas
 7. West Virginia (new to Top Ten this year)
 8. Holston (#1 in 2005)
 9. Great Plains
 10. Western North Carolina (new to Top Ten this year)
- **The Top Five Conferences by numbers**
 1. Western North Carolina — 24
 2. North Carolina — 23
 3. Horizon Texas — 20

Young Deacons

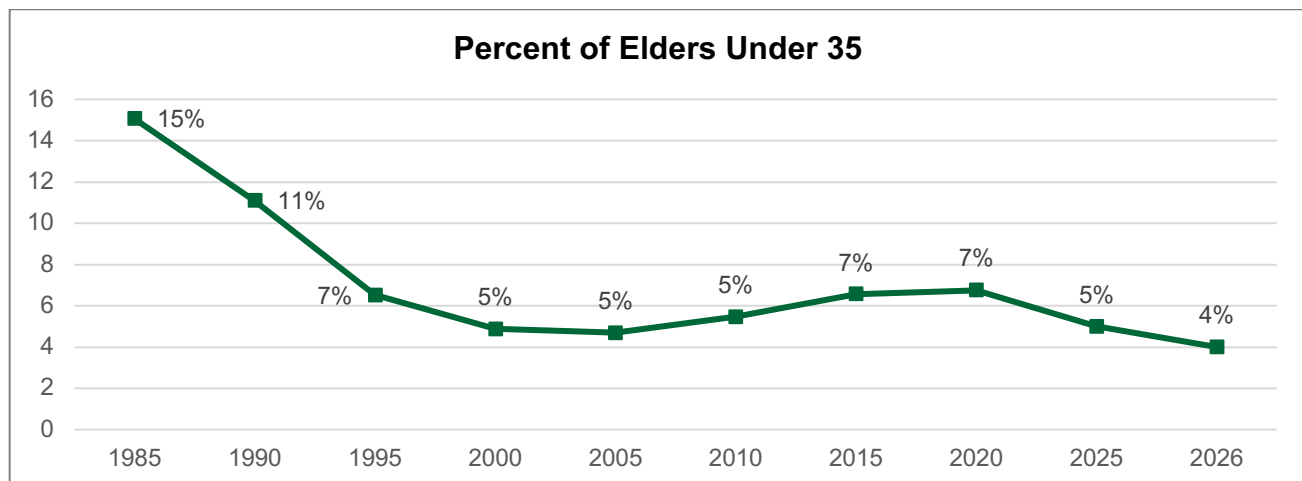
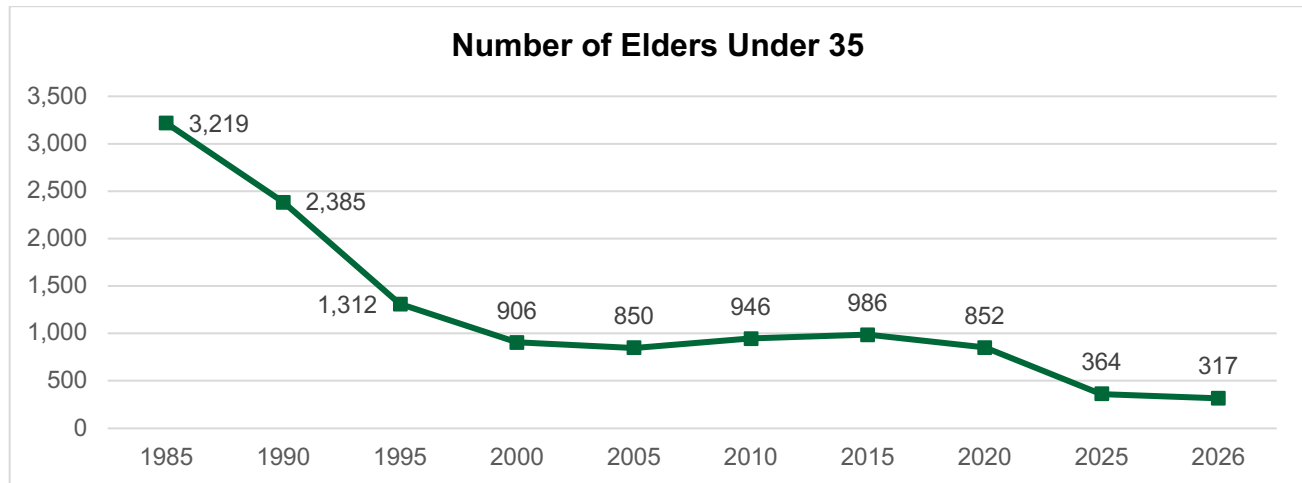
- The number of under-35 deacons remained the same at 59.
- The percentage of under-35 deacons as a percentage of all deacons remained at 7 percent.
- The percentage of young deacons remains above that of elders and local pastors.
- The percentage of male deacons continues to increase among young deacons. They constitute 36 percent of young deacons, the highest proportion recorded to date.

Young Local Pastors

- The number of under-35 local pastors declined in 2026 to 229 from 242 in 2025.
- The percentage of young local pastors among all active local pastors remained at 6 percent.

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

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%
2025	7,994	364	5%	3,669	46%	3,961	50%
2026	7,607	317	4%	3,568	47%	3,722	49%

**Gender Breakdown within
Age Cohorts — Elders**

Year	Gender	Under 35	35-54	55-72
2024	Men	57%	61%	63%
	Women	43%	39%	37%
2025	Men	57%	60%	62%
	Women	43%	40%	38%
2026	Men	55%	60%	60%
	Women	45%	40%	40%

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
2025	55	52
2026	55	53

*Median — half older, half younger

Average and Median Ages by Conference

Median — half older, half younger

CONFERENCE	2026 Average	2026 Median
Alabama-West Florida	50	50
Alaska Missionary	-	-
Arkansas	52	53
Baltimore-Washington	54	56
California-Nevada	57	58
California-Pacific	56	57
Central Appalachian	56	56
Dakotas	49	51
Desert Southwest	53	54
East Ohio	53	55
Eastern Pennsylvania	56	57
Florida	52	54
Great Plains	52	52
Greater New Jersey	54	54
Holston	52	53
Horizon Texas	52	52
Illinois Great Rivers	54	56
Indiana	55	56
Iowa	53	55
Kentucky	51	51
Louisiana	53	55
Michigan	54	55
Minnesota	54	55
Mississippi	55	56
Missouri	52	52
Mountain Sky	54	55
New England	54	56

CONFERENCE	2026 Average	2026 Median
New Mexico	57	58
New York	57	59
North Alabama	50	51
North Carolina	50	50
North Georgia	53	55
Northern Illinois	55	57
Oklahoma	52	54
Oklahoma Indian	61	61
Oregon Idaho	54	54
Pacific Northwest	51	52
Peninsula-Delaware	56	60
Rio Texas	53	54
South Carolina	55	58
South Georgia	55	57
Susquehanna	55	56
Tennessee-Western Ky	53	55
Texas	51	51
Upper New York	56	58
Virginia	52	52
West Ohio	55	57
West Virginia	54	56
Western North Carolina	53	53
Western Pennsylvania	55	57
Wisconsin	54	55
All Elders	53	55

**Presence of Elders under 35
by Annual Conference
2024-2026**

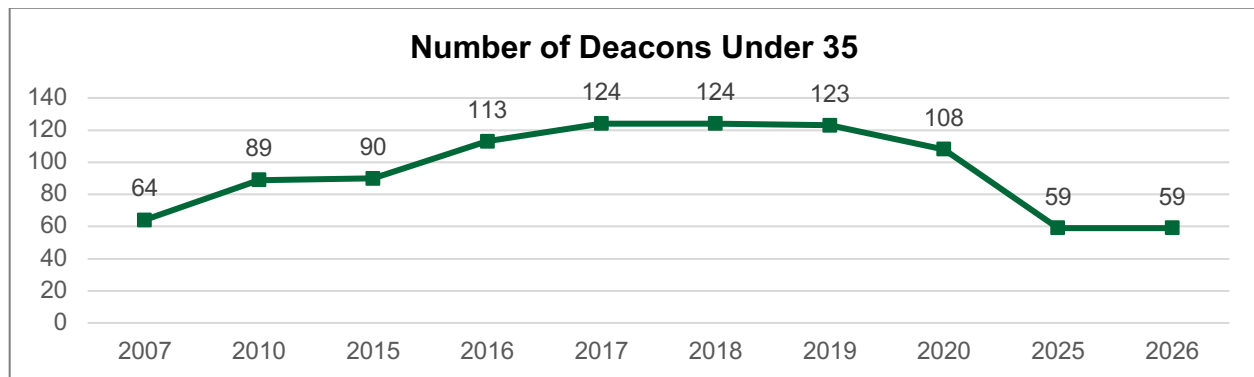
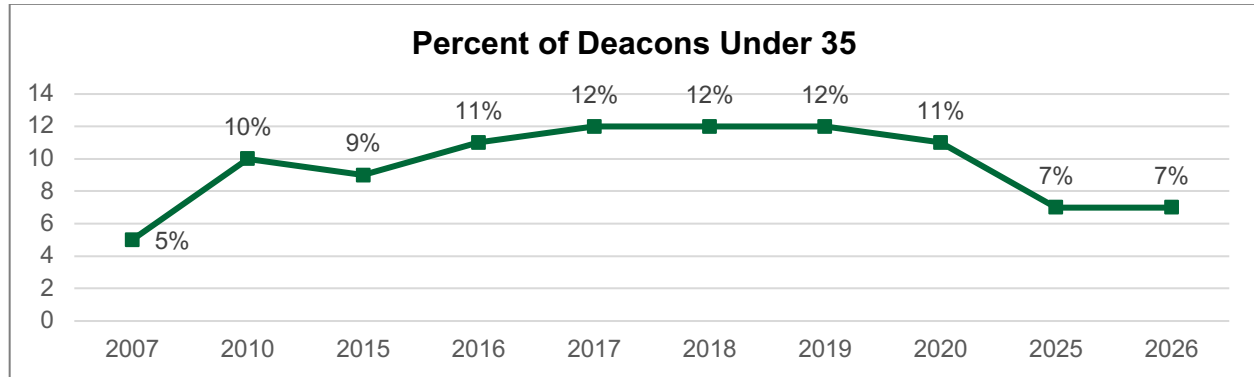
CONFERENCE	2026 Elders under 35	2026 Elders under 35	2026 Elders	2025 Elders under 35	2025 Elders under 35	2025 Elders	2024 Elders under 35	2024 Elders under 35	2024 Elders
Alabama-West Florida	10	11.8%	85	8	9.0%	89	6	6.5%	93
Alaska Missionary	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Arkansas	5	4.3%	115	5	4.2%	118	5	4.0%	125
Baltimore-Washington	6	2.4%	254	9	3.4%	266	11	3.9%	284
California-Nevada	3	1.9%	161	3	1.9%	160	4	2.2%	180
California-Pacific	3	1.3%	226	3	1.3%	234	4	1.6%	252
Central Appalachian	0	0.0%	1	0	0.0%	2	0	0.0%	2
Dakotas	6	8.3%	72	6	8.0%	75	5	6.5%	77
Desert Southwest	3	4.6%	65	2	3.2%	63	2	3.0%	67
East Ohio	1	0.9%	117	5	3.8%	132	7	4.8%	145
Eastern Pennsylvania	2	1.7%	119	4	3.1%	130	4	2.9%	139
Florida	14	5.5%	253	16	6.1%	262	19	7.1%	268
Great Plains	15	6.1%	247	18	6.9%	261	20	7.5%	266
Greater New Jersey	8	4.2%	189	9	4.5%	201	9	4.3%	211
Holston	11	6.2%	177	12	6.2%	194	10	4.9%	204
Horizon Texas	20	6.4%	313	30	9.4%	320			
Illinois Great Rivers	7	5.5%	127	7	5.0%	140	7	4.3%	162
Indiana	8	3.8%	208	7	3.2%	221	6	2.6%	231
Iowa	8	5.6%	143	9	6.3%	144	10	6.4%	157
Kentucky	4	4.3%	92	3	3.1%	96	5	5.0%	100
Louisiana	2	2.7%	74	4	5.1%	78	6	7.0%	86
Michigan	5	2.5%	200	5	2.4%	211	6	2.8%	215
Minnesota	4	4.3%	94	3	3.1%	98	3	2.9%	105
Mississippi	2	1.7%	119	1	0.7%	139	2	1.2%	172
Missouri	8	4.7%	172	5	2.9%	174	6	3.2%	187
Mountain Sky	6	3.8%	158	7	4.2%	168	8	4.6%	174
New England	3	2.0%	149	5	3.4%	146	6	4.0%	150
New Mexico	0	0.0%	32	1	2.6%	38	1	2.6%	38
New York	2	1.1%	181	3	1.6%	190	5	2.5%	199

**Presence of Elders under 35
by Annual Conference
2024-2026, continued**

CONFERENCE	2026 Elders under 35	2026 Elders under 35	2026 Elders	2025 Elders under 35	2025 Elders under 35	2025 Elders	2024 Elders under 35	2024 Elders under 35	2024 Elders
North Alabama	10	8.2%	122	7	5.8%	121	9	6.80%	132
North Carolina	23	9.6%	239	25	10.6%	236	22	9.00%	245
North Georgia	11	4.2%	260	15	5.5%	273	14	4.90%	288
Northern Illinois	2	1.1%	188	5	2.5%	203	6	2.80%	217
Oklahoma	8	6.5%	123	9	6.8%	132	9	6.30%	143
OK Indian Missionary	0	0.0%	6	0	0.0%	8	0	0.00%	9
Oregon-Idaho	1	1.9%	53	2	3.5%	57	3	4.90%	61
Pacific Northwest	3	2.8%	109	7	6.0%	117	8	6.70%	119
Peninsula-Delaware	2	3.2%	62	2	3.3%	60	3	4.50%	66
Rio Texas	4	3.5%	114	4	3.3%	121	4	3.10%	130
South Carolina	10	4.5%	221	11	4.8%	228	14	5.40%	260
South Georgia	1	1.9%	54	1	1.6%	62	1	1.10%	90
Susquehanna	3	2.9%	105	3	2.7%	112	3	2.50%	121
Tenn-Western KY	8	5.0%	161	8	4.6%	174	11	5.70%	194
Texas	10	5.4%	184	14	7.2%	194	20	9.80%	204
Upper New York	3	2.2%	134	1	0.7%	134	2	1.40%	146
Virginia	11	3.0%	369	20	5.1%	392	24	5.90%	404
West Ohio	5	2.2%	231	4	1.6%	252	5	1.90%	262
West Virginia	6	6.3%	95	5	4.7%	106	2	1.80%	110
Western North Carolina	24	6.1%	396	23	5.7%	406	21	5.20%	403
Western Pennsylvania	4	3.3%	123	4	3.2%	126	6	4.30%	139
Wisconsin	2	1.7%	115	4	3.1%	130	4	3.00%	133
Total	317	4.17%	7,607	364	4.55%	7,994	398	4.68%	8,505

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 Wespeth.



Trends for Deacons

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%
2020	983	108	11%	429	44%	446	45%
2025	795	59	7%	432	54%	304	38%
2026	792	59	7%	440	56%	293	37%

Median and Average Ages — Deacons

Year	Median* Age	Average Age
2006	53	52
2007	52	51
2008	53	51
2009	53	51
2010	54	52
2015	54	52
2020	53	51
2025	50	50
2026	50	50

*Median — half older, half younger.

**Gender Breakdown within
Age Cohorts — Deacons**

Year	Gender	Under 35	35-54	55-72
2024	Men	32%	28%	20%
	Women	68%	72%	80%
2025	Men	31%	28%	22%
	Women	69%	72%	78%
2026	Men	36%	27%	22%
	Women	64%	73%	78%

Deacons

Presence of Deacons under 35 by Annual Conference 2024-2026

CONFERENCE	2026 Deacons under 35	2026 Deacons under 35	2026 Deacons	2025 Deacons under 35	2025 Deacons under 35	2025 Deacons	2024 Deacons under 35	2024 Deacons under 35	2024 Deacons
Alabama-West Florida	2	10.0%	20	3	14.3%	21	4	14.8%	27
Alaska Missionary	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Arkansas	2	16.7%	12	1	9.1%	11	1	8.3%	12
Baltimore-Washington	0	0.0%	19	0	0.0%	17	0	0.0%	20
California-Nevada	1	10.0%	10	1	9.1%	11	1	8.3%	12
California-Pacific	0	0.0%	12	0	0.0%	8	0	0.0%	9
Central Appalachian	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Dakotas	0	0.0%	4	0	0.0%	5	0	0.0%	4
Desert Southwest	0	0.0%	3	0	0.0%	3	0	0.0%	4
East Ohio	0	0.0%	9	0	0.0%	12	2	14.3%	14
Eastern Pennsylvania	0	0.0%	14	0	0.0%	15	0	0.0%	15
Florida	5	17.2%	29	5	16.1%	31	4	14.8%	27
Great Plains	5	25.0%	20	5	25.0%	20	5	23.8%	21
Greater New Jersey	0	0.0%	8	0	0.0%	9	0	0.0%	9
Holston	0	0.0%	11	1	9.1%	11	1	8.3%	12
Horizon Texas	8	12.5%	64	6	9.5%	63			
Illinois Great Rivers	0	0.0%	11	0	0.0%	13	0	0.0%	15
Indiana	0	0.0%	16	0	0.0%	18	0	0.0%	17
Iowa	0	0.0%	4	0	0.0%	3	0	0.0%	4
Kentucky	0	0.0%	11	0	0.0%	12	0	0.0%	12
Louisiana	1	11.1%	9	1	9.1%	11	1	9.1%	11
Michigan	0	0.0%	21	1	4.8%	21	1	4.3%	23
Minnesota	0	0.0%	11	0	0.0%	10	1	9.1%	11
Mississippi	2	14.3%	14	1	9.1%	11	1	9.1%	11
Missouri	2	7.7%	26	2	7.7%	26	3	12.0%	25
Mountain Sky	0	0.0%	12	0	0.0%	14	0	0.0%	13
New England	0	0.0%	10	1	10.0%	10	1	11.1%	9
New Mexico	0	0.0%	1	0	0.0%	2	0	0.0%	3
New York	1	16.7%	6	1	16.7%	6	2	28.6%	7

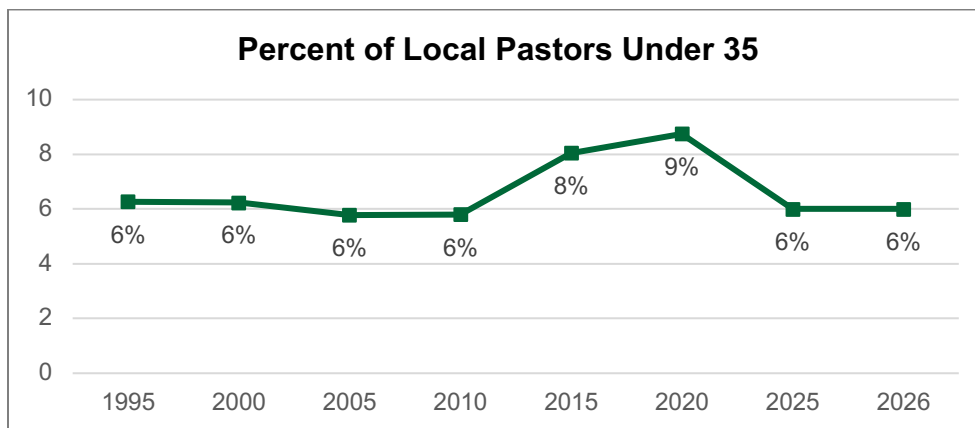
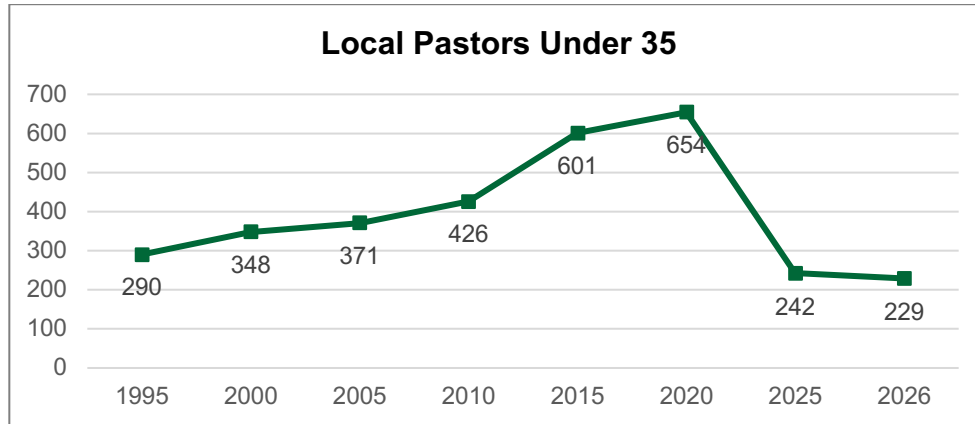
Deacons

Presence of Deacons under 35 by Annual Conference 2024-2026, continued

CONFERENCE	2026 Deacons under 35	2026 Deacons under 35	2026 Deacons	2025 Deacons under 35	2025 Deacons under 35	2025 Deacons	2024 Deacons under 35	2024 Deacons under 35	2024 Deacons
North Alabama	3	23.1%	13	0	0.0%	10	0	0.00%	11
North Carolina	4	16.7%	24	3	13.0%	23	3	12.00%	25
North Georgia	3	6.1%	49	2	4.1%	49	1	1.90%	52
Northern Illinois	1	4.3%	23	0	0.0%	23	0	0.00%	23
Oklahoma	0	0.0%	6	0	0.0%	8	0	0.00%	9
OK Indian Missionary	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.00%	0
Oregon-Idaho	0	0.0%	8	0	0.0%	7	0	0.00%	8
Pacific Northwest	2	20.0%	10	2	20.0%	10	0	0.00%	8
Peninsula-Delaware	0	0.0%	3	0	0.0%	1	0	0.00%	3
Rio Texas	2	9.1%	22	1	5.3%	19	1	5.60%	18
South Carolina	1	4.3%	23	1	4.8%	21	1	4.50%	22
South Georgia	0	0.0%	7	0	0.0%	7	0	0.00%	9
Susquehanna	0	0.0%	2	0	0.0%	1	0	0.00%	2
Tenn-Western KY	3	6.7%	45	3	7.0%	43	2	4.40%	45
Texas	0	0.0%	24	0	0.0%	25	0	0.00%	23
Upper New York	0	0.0%	12	1	8.3%	12	1	7.10%	14
Virginia	4	12.9%	31	4	12.9%	31	4	12.90%	31
West Ohio	2	7.7%	26	2	6.7%	30	1	3.70%	27
West Virginia	0	0.0%	4	0	0.0%	5	0	0.00%	7
Western North Carolina	4	7.3%	55	8	14.0%	57	8	13.30%	60
Western Pennsylvania	1	14.3%	7	2	25.0%	8	3	37.50%	8
Wisconsin	0	0.0%	11	1	9.1%	11	1	9.10%	11
Total	59	7.4%	792	59	7.4%	795	60	7.2%	830

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

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%
2025	4,148	242	6%	1,516	36%	2,390	58%
2026	3,923	229	6%	1,455	37%	2,239	57%

Median and Average Ages — Local Pastors

Year	Median Age	Average Age
1985	51	50
1990	51	50
1995	51	50
2000	52	51
2005	53	52
2010	55	54
2015	57	54
2020	57	54
2025	58	55
2026	57	55

* Median — half older, half younger

Gender Breakdown within Age Cohorts — Local Pastors

Year	Gender	Under 35	35-54	55-72
2024	Men	67%	63%	57%
	Women	33%	37%	43%
2025	Men	64%	62%	56%
	Women	36%	38%	44%
2026	Men	64%	62%	54%
	Women	36%	38%	46%

Local Pastors

Presence of Local Pastors under 35 by Annual Conference 2024-2026

CONFERENCE	2026 Local Pastors under 35	2026 Local Pastors under 35	2026 Local Pastors	2025 Local Pastors under 35	2025 Local Pastors under 35	2025 Local Pastors	2024 Local Pastors under 35	2024 Local Pastors under 35	2024 Local Pastors
Alabama-West Florida	5	8.5%	59	8	11.4%	70	8	11.0%	73
Alaska Missionary	3	42.9%	7	3	42.9%	7	0	0.0%	4
Arkansas	7	12.1%	58	8	14.5%	55	6	10.5%	57
Baltimore-Washington	0	0.0%	91	0	0.0%	101	1	1.1%	94
California-Nevada	1	2.4%	42	0	0.0%	42	0	0.0%	46
California-Pacific	1	1.7%	58	3	4.8%	62	5	7.8%	64
Central Appalachian	0	0.0%	3	0	0.0%	3	0	0.0%	2
Dakotas	3	7.1%	42	4	9.8%	41	6	11.8%	51
Desert Southwest	2	5.7%	35	2	7.4%	27	1	3.6%	28
East Ohio	5	6.3%	80	6	7.2%	83	4	4.7%	86
Eastern Pennsylvania	5	5.2%	96	5	5.1%	98	6	5.7%	106
Florida	1	1.1%	87	3	3.2%	95	6	6.0%	100
Great Plains	9	6.6%	137	7	5.0%	139	7	5.0%	141
Greater New Jersey	11	8.4%	131	10	7.5%	133	10	7.3%	137
Holston	0	0.0%	43	1	2.2%	45	4	6.3%	63
Horizon Texas	11	9.9%	111	8	7.3%	109			
Illinois Great Rivers	5	4.6%	109	7	5.4%	129	8	5.5%	145
Indiana	5	4.5%	112	6	5.4%	111	7	5.9%	118
Iowa	5	5.2%	96	3	3.0%	99	5	6.1%	82
Kentucky	7	8.8%	80	6	7.2%	82	9	9.5%	95
Louisiana	3	5.9%	51	1	1.8%	55	1	1.7%	59
Michigan	7	6.4%	110	8	6.9%	116	7	5.4%	130
Minnesota	1	1.4%	70	1	1.3%	76	6	7.2%	83
Mississippi	0	0.0%	91	3	2.6%	116	5	3.9%	129
Missouri	6	4.3%	141	8	5.8%	139	6	4.1%	148
Mountain Sky	4	6.9%	58	4	7.0%	57	4	7.1%	56
New England	4	4.5%	88	3	3.2%	93	2	2.2%	92
New Mexico	0	0.0%	12	1	7.1%	14	1	5.9%	17
New York	3	7.0%	43	2	4.8%	42	1	2.4%	41

**Presence of Local Pastors under 35
by Annual Conference
2024-2026, continued**

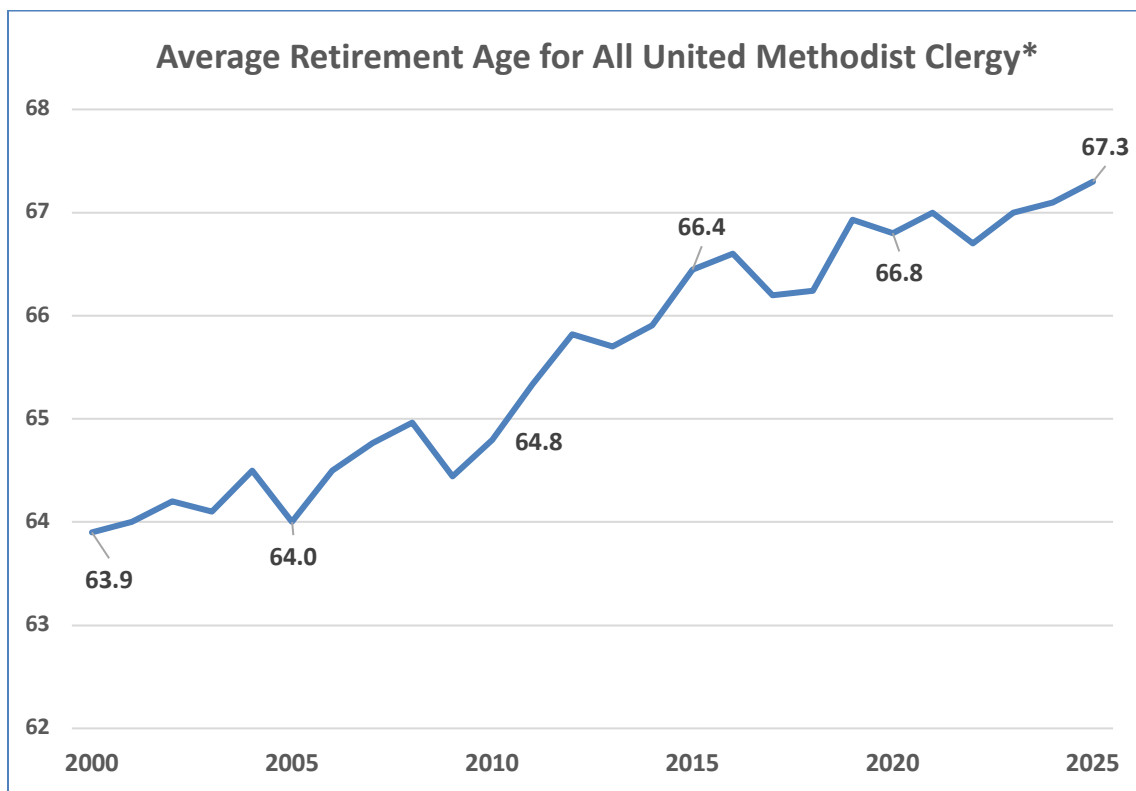
CONFERENCE	2026 Local Pastors under 35	2026 Local Pastors under 35	2026 Local Pastors	2025 Local Pastors under 35	2025 Local Pastors under 35	2025 Local Pastors	2024 Local Pastors under 35	2024 Local Pastors under 35	2024 Local Pastors
North Alabama	6	9.5%	63	6	8.0%	75	10	12.0%	83
North Carolina	9	9.7%	93	10	9.9%	101	22	19.6%	112
North Georgia	14	11.9%	118	16	12.3%	130	17	12.1%	141
Northern Illinois	4	6.9%	58	4	6.8%	59	3	6.3%	48
Oklahoma	6	8.8%	68	5	7.1%	70	7	9.6%	73
OK Indian Missionary	0	0.0%	11	1	10.0%	10	1	12.5%	8
Oregon-Idaho	2	10.0%	20	3	14.3%	21	6	30.0%	20
Pacific Northwest	1	5.9%	17	1	5.9%	17	1	5.6%	18
Peninsula-Delaware	4	7.3%	55	7	11.1%	63	5	7.2%	69
Rio Texas	1	1.4%	71	2	2.4%	85	8	8.5%	94
South Carolina	4	3.0%	133	7	4.4%	159	6	2.8%	214
South Georgia	1	4.2%	24	0	0.0%	26	3	6.3%	48
Susquehanna	2	1.9%	108	2	1.7%	117	6	4.5%	134
Tenn-Western KY	8	7.8%	103	5	4.4%	114	5	4.2%	119
Texas	4	7.0%	57	5	9.3%	54	8	14.3%	56
Upper New York	4	3.5%	114	5	4.5%	111	5	3.5%	143
Virginia	13	7.2%	180	11	5.8%	189	11	5.7%	194
West Ohio	8	6.1%	131	12	9.2%	130	9	6.7%	135
West Virginia	8	9.2%	87	6	5.8%	103	9	6.7%	134
Western North Carolina	11	8.3%	132	8	6.5%	124	15	11.7%	128
Western Pennsylvania	1	1.6%	63	2	3.0%	67	1	1.3%	80
Wisconsin	4	5.3%	76	3	3.6%	83	3	3.6%	83
Total	229	5.8%	3,923	242	5.8%	4,148	294	6.6%	4,483

Annual Conference Clergy by Age Group: Numeric — 2026

	Deacons				Elders				Local Pastors			
CONFERENCE	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	2	11	7	20	10	45	30	85	5	19	35	59
Alaska Missionary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	3	7
Arkansas	2	5	5	12	5	60	50	115	7	19	32	58
Baltimore-Washington	0	11	8	19	6	110	138	254	0	32	59	91
California-Nevada	1	6	3	10	3	56	102	161	1	22	19	42
California-Pacific	0	7	5	12	3	94	129	226	1	21	36	58
Central Appalachian	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	3	3
Dakotas	0	4	0	4	6	43	23	72	3	21	18	42
Desert Southwest	0	0	3	3	3	31	31	65	2	15	18	35
East Ohio	0	3	6	9	1	59	57	117	5	35	40	80
Eastern Pennsylvania	0	5	9	14	2	47	70	119	5	35	56	96
Florida	5	19	5	29	14	127	112	253	1	41	45	87
Great Plains	5	10	5	20	15	126	106	247	9	57	71	137
Greater New Jersey	0	4	4	8	8	94	87	189	11	50	70	131
Holston	0	4	7	11	11	87	79	177	0	16	27	43
Horizon Texas	8	40	16	64	20	158	135	313	11	50	50	111
Illinois Great Rivers	0	4	7	11	7	51	69	127	5	38	66	109
Indiana	0	15	1	16	8	92	108	208	5	48	59	112
Iowa	0	2	2	4	8	69	66	143	5	39	52	96
Kentucky	0	4	7	11	4	48	40	92	7	41	32	80
Louisiana	1	6	2	9	2	31	41	74	3	21	27	51
Michigan	0	10	11	21	5	95	100	200	7	48	55	110
Minnesota	0	9	2	11	4	42	48	94	1	30	39	70
Mississippi	2	7	5	14	2	49	68	119	0	28	63	91
Missouri	2	17	7	26	8	97	67	172	6	58	77	141
Mountain Sky	0	5	7	12	6	75	77	158	4	20	34	58
New England	0	7	3	10	3	69	77	149	4	29	55	88
New Mexico	0	0	1	1	0	13	19	32	0	4	8	12
New York	1	3	2	6	2	64	115	181	3	13	27	43

Annual Conference Clergy by Age Group: Numeric — 2026

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	3	8	2	13	10	65	47	122	6	24	33	63
North Carolina	4	14	6	24	23	126	90	239	9	29	55	93
North Georgia	3	27	19	49	11	122	127	260	14	32	72	118
Northern Illinois	1	15	7	23	2	78	108	188	4	26	28	58
Oklahoma	0	4	2	6	8	58	57	123	6	28	34	68
OK Indian Mission	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	6	0	4	7	11
Oregon-Idaho	0	4	4	8	1	30	22	53	2	11	7	20
Pacific Northwest	2	5	3	10	3	62	44	109	1	6	10	17
Peninsula-Delaware	0	1	2	3	2	22	38	62	4	15	36	55
Rio Texas	2	14	6	22	4	58	52	114	1	30	40	71
South Carolina	1	11	11	23	10	85	126	221	4	29	100	133
South Georgia	0	5	2	7	1	23	30	54	1	5	18	24
Susquehanna	0	1	1	2	3	47	55	105	2	42	64	108
Tenn.-Western KY	3	28	14	45	8	74	79	161	8	42	53	103
Texas	0	14	10	24	10	98	76	184	4	31	22	57
Upper New York	0	3	9	12	3	53	78	134	4	30	80	114
Virginia	4	14	13	31	11	209	149	369	13	54	113	180
West Ohio	2	15	9	26	5	93	133	231	8	48	75	131
West Virginia	0	0	4	4	6	38	51	95	8	30	49	87
Western North Carolina	4	28	23	55	24	186	186	396	11	33	88	132
Western Pennsylvania	1	6	0	7	4	51	68	123	1	21	41	63
Wisconsin	0	5	6	11	2	56	57	115	4	34	38	76
Total	59	440	293	792	317	3,568	3,722	7,607	229	1,455	2,239	3,923



*includes Jurisdictional and Central Conferences

Average Retirement Ages

	2025	2005
Elders	67	64
Deacons	67	64
Full-Time Local Pastors**	68	65
Part-Time Local Pastors	70	67

**includes Associate Members

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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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